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COUNTRY LIFE

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PERSONAL

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MISCELLANEOUS

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GARAGES, Garden Sheds, Living Huts, Store Huts, Workshops, Small Bungalows, all completely sectional, of sound design and construction. Made from Government surplus, indistinguishable from new, weatherproof and lasting. Economical prices.—Complete Illustrated Price List post free from actual manufacturers, REDWIND FOREST PRODUCTS, LTD., Dept. C.L.12, Brockham, Betchworth, Surrey. Betchworth 2390.

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CLASSIFIED ANNOUNCEMENTS

2/- per line (Minimum 3 lines) Box Fee 1/6

SITUATIONS VACANT

H. M. FORESTRY COMMISSIONERS invite applications from men for appointments as District (Forest) Officer or District (Estate) Officer. Candidates must have been born on or after August 2, 1906, and have attained the age of 21. Candidates born before August 2, 1906, must be admitted if they have specially suitable qualifications. Salary £310 x £25 to £650. —Forms of application with further particulars from SECRETARY, Forestry Commission, 25, Savile Row, London, W.1. Last date for applications April 30, 1947, but applications from candidates now serving in H.M. Forces accepted up to July 31, 1947.

LADY has self-contained fully furnished flat, heating and light, in country house. In return for caretaking and little help in house. Ex-service or retired police officer preferred.—Box 219.

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SITUATIONS WANTED

GENTLEMAN, independent means, offers assist management sporting estate in return for accommodation. No salary required. Expert training dogs and horses.—Box 211.

SINGLE YOUNG MAN, educated, good family, with technical qualifications and practical experience in agriculture, seeks post in farm, estate or land agent, where scope and responsibility.—Box 190.

YOUNG LADY, shorthand typist and driver, requires resident post to person in S. England.—Box 220.

YOUNG MAN, ex-public school and Navy, seeks position as pupil to gentleman farmer for 6-9 months to gain experience prior to taking post in East Africa. Home Counties, South or South-West preferred.—Box 221.

YOUNG WOMAN, qualified secretarial, administrative work, organising, shorthand, typing, etc., desires work, preferably Tunbridge Wells, Kent, area; used to farm and country life. Highest references.—Box 218.

LIVESTOCK

ADORABLE Afghan Puppies, pedigree, 8 champions, 5 international champions. Elegant, adaptable, wonderful temperament, fearless guard. From 20 gns.—"Shang-ri-la" Hampton Court Road, Hampton, Middx. Molesey 3045.

CHELSEFIELD KENNELS, Bishopsdale, Leyburn, Yorks. Have the following attractive well-bred puppies for sale from 10 guineas. Miniature and standard Poodles, Dandie Dinmonts, Affghans, Long-haired Dachshunds, Scotties and Pekingese. Also winning dogs at stud.

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PARROT FOOD, 6 pints 20/-, Budgerigar Seed 4 pints 20/-, Canary Mixture, 4 pints 20/-, All post free. Peat, granulated, 17 1/2 cwt. (approx.) carriage paid. Crushed Oyster Shell, 1 cwt. 25/-, 56 lbs. 15/-, carriage paid. Hop Manure, 20/- cwt. carriage paid.—ROTUNDA FOODS, South Street, Barking, Surrey.

ROYAL SIAMESE KITTENS. Sire "best exhibit in show," Siamese Championship Show, October 1946. Dam of unrivalled strain. Approved homes only.—MRS. KAYE, 150, Beltinge Road, Herne Bay.

"SWANHILL" Miniature Poodles, noted for hardiness and character. Fascinating, devoted companions. Black, white, chocolate, blue. Seen by appointment.—Phone: Wansford 228, BUCKLE, Wansford, Peterborough.

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CHANNEL ISLANDS. Charming hotel on sea edge offers friendly welcome, unrivalled sea sands, bathing, surfing, boating, fishing. The best food, fruit and vegetables; excellent beds.—ROQUAINE HOTEL, Rocquaine Bay, Guernsey. Telephone 3217.

CORNWALL. A private suite in a Country House with warmth and every comfort. Good food from own farm. Excellent cooking and personal service. You will find this at: "Goonvrea," Perran-ar-werth, near Truro. Tel.: 172.

COTSWOLDS. Crown Hotel, Blockley, Moreton-in-Marsh, XVth-century Inn, noted for good food, good ales and comfort.

EASTER at FARRINGFORD near Freshwater, Isle of Wight. Greet the Spring at this delightful Country House Hotel, where you will be welcomed as an honoured guest. Once the home of Lord Tennyson, the Poet Laureate, Farringford has splendid views, every comfort, and pleasant surroundings. 5 days, 10/6. Write for illustrated brochure to the Manager, or to THOS. COOK & SON, LTD., Berkeley Street, London, W.1 and branches.

EXMOOR. Dunkery Beacon Hotel, Wootton Courtenay, near Minehead. Own riding stables, hunting with three packs. Situated in glorious country, four miles from sea. Comfortable beds. Hot and cold in all rooms. Good food.

FAVOURITE BY NATURE. Branksome Tower Hotel gives luxurious comfort amidst a perfect natural setting—pines, cliffs and a private sea promenade. Patronised by Royalty, and people accustomed to the world's finest hotels, it has an international reputation for gracious living, flawless service and a wine cellar par excellence. Several excellent golf courses nearby. BRANKSOME TOWER HOTEL. Phone: Bournemouth 4000.

"Grams": Branksome Tower, Bournemouth.

HOLBOURNE HOUSE Somerset's new Hotel and Country Club near Wincanton is now open. Well appointed, centrally heated, finest English cookery. Golf, Hunting, Hacking.

HUNTING WITH THREE PACKS, horses available locally. Good food, quiet and comfort, from 5 gns.—WOODFORD BRIDGE HOTEL, Milton Damerel, N. Devon. Tel.: Milton Damerel 252.

IT'S like a delightful home without the troubles of housekeeping.

DORMY HOUSE HOTEL, WESTWARD HO!, N. DEVON. During the trying early months of the year, rest awhile in the exceptional warmth and comfort of this hotel and enjoy the delightful cooking. Central heating. Adjoins golf links. Licensed club. Special winter terms. Tel.: Northam 288.

OLD TREE HOUSE HOTEL

NEAR LAUNCESTON, CORNWALL. Forget these weary times in this beautifully appointed Country House where you will find peace, courtesy, and luxury and comfort. Lovely surroundings with opportunities for golf, riding, shooting, and fishing. Fresh country produce to help the expert chef satisfy every taste. A glimpse of pre-war England!

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HOTEL FACHO, FOZ DO ARELHO, Fishing, duck-shooting, seaside.

Both hotels under British management.

RAVENSPONT, Treardurf Bay, Anglesey. First-class Hotel recently opened. Permanent Guests taken. Apply, Manager.

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The foremost hotel on the Sea Front. Comfort, warmth, friendly and informal, 1,500 acres good rough shooting. Golf Course nearby. FULLY LICENSED. Tel. 17.

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SOUTH DEVON. Comfortable Private Hotel, with h. and c. and spring mattresses in all rooms, has few winter vacancies. Very sheltered position near sea and shops. 4½-5 gns. per week. Brochure from Resident Manageress, Barton Grange, Dawlish.

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THOSE accustomed to an exquisite home and exceptional comfort will appreciate the charm of

VILLA VITA KINGSDOWN, DEAL, KENT. With 8 acres gardens. Overlooking the sea. Club bar. Charges from 10 gns.

HOTELS AND GUESTS

TORR HOUSE, Chagford, Devon. Known for comfort and good food, winter residents, terms from 5 guineas. Riding and hunting. "Phone: Chagford 3139.

WEST WALES. BRYNCOTHI PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL AND SPORTING HOTEL. Over 3 miles private fishing on renowned trout and sea trout River Cofli. Roads limited to 3,000 acres rough shooting. Country house atmosphere. Superb position and scenery. First-class cuisine. Five double bedrooms only available. All modern conveniences.—Write for brochure to COMMANDER NICHOLAS, Bryncothi, Abergele, Carmarthenshire. Tel.: Brechfa 5.

RESTAURANTS

HERMITAGE RESTAURANT, 20, Dover Street, W.1. Reg. 5176. Lunch, dinner, theatre supper, 5/-, service charge 6d. French and Russian cuisine. Afternoon teas. Fully Licensed. Private room for receptions, weddings, etc.

FOR SALE

ABOUT 10,000 Rolls Galvanised Wire (Settling), 15 yd. lengths, 3 in. mesh, 12G. No. 1000 required. 3 ft. widths, 30/- 4 ft. 40/- 5 ft. 60/- 6 ft. 60/- 8 ft. 60/- Carriage 2/6 per roll, 10/- rolls 5/- Carriage paid on 10 rolls.—LAURENCE ALDRICH (MERCHANTS) LTD., 1, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.4. Tel.: 3114.

ALABASTER BOWL, electric light, pendant, 15 in. diameter, £10. Two other semi-oval glass and bronze, 20 in. diameter, £35 pair. Six-light wrought iron Electric, 20 in. diameter, candle bulb fittings, £15. 5/- Pithers "open fire" stainless steel, 18 in. Stove, 5,000 cu. ft. size, £22. Another large, 24 in. stove, £30.—ROBERTS, "Beratelle" Market Harborough 2266.

BABY SEAL FUR COAT, gun metal slide, edge to edge, three-quarter length, medium size. Perfect condition. N.C. £120.—Box 227.

20-BRE Hammerless Ejector. Ru. 20/- Case. Built for lady of the nobility. Impossible to replace. 100 gns. Bargain.—Box 223.

CURTIS TWO-HORSE BOX mounted on local wheelbase, 1939 Bedford chassis, luxurious fittings, perfect condition, little used.—Particulars from SIVVER, 29, Elgin Avenue, Kenton Harrow, Middlesex.

FAULTY TELEPHONE WIRE CHEAPER THAN STRING! Insulated, waterproof, suitable for fencing, packing, horticulture, etc. 55/- (carriage paid) per mile. Immediate delivery. Sample against cash.—Write, Dept. 6, c/o STREETS, 110, Old Broad Street, E.C.2.

FINEST quality dark Canadian Skunk Fur Coat (£150 cost £250 October). Dark Mink Tie, £10. Persian Lamb Coat, £100. Perfect.—Box 224.

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REAL hand-knitted Fair Isle Berets, 17/6 each. Kiddies' Berets, 16/6 each. Ladies' Fair Isle Gloves, 21/- pair, 1 coupon. Ladies' all-over Fair Isle Jumpers, long sleeves, 155/6 6 coupons; with short sleeves, 124/6 6 coupons. Fair Isle bordered Cardigans, 85/6 6 coupons. Fair Isle, bordered Jumpers, 80/6 6 coupons. Plain Shetland Jumpers, 65/6 6 coupons. Gent's all-over Fair Isle Slippers, 110/- each, 6 coupons. Gent's Fair Isle bordered Slippers, 65/- 6 coupons. Gent's hand-knitted woollen Slippers, 25/- 9 coupons. Hand-knitted woollen Golf or Shooting Stockings, 2/6 pair, 2 coupons. Shetland Shawls, approx. 60 in. x 60 in. white or natural, 67/6 4 coupons. Shetland Sheepskin Rugs, approx. 38 in. x 30 in. white, cream, gold, rose, pink, brown, 13/- 10 coupons; smaller sizes, 14/- each, no coupons. Knitwear list on request. Complete satisfaction guaranteed.—HEBRIDEAN CROFTING WEAVERS, Muir of Aird, Benbecula, Outer Hebrides.

SEED BOXES ready for sowing, 45/- 100, 25/- 50, 10/- 25, 5/- 10. Large and Tallies, 10/- 400, smaller, 5/- 200. Tallies, 10/- 500. Firewood, large sack, 10/- 100. Kennels, 35/-.—BIRMINGHAM PLANT STORES, Station Road, Erdington.

WATER DIVINING, OASIS Pocket Divining Rod, anyone can use it, 10/-; ditto sensitive partner, 21/- Four Essays on Water Divining, 6/- the set.—AHTS, Belcombe, Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts.

WANTED

BENTLEY OR ROLLS-ROYCE S. 100, urgently required.—LIONEL H. PUGH, Brooks Mews, W.1. Mayfair 4433.

GUNS, both new and secondhand, for sale. Immediate attention. FITTING at our shooting grounds. Partridge free.—CHURCHILL, Orange Street, Gouk, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.

LIBRARIES or smaller collections of books wanted. Highest prices paid. Removal of my expense; any distance.—HAMMOND, 22, Dreads Lane, Birmingham 8.

OLD Books, with coloured plates of birds and flowers. High prices paid.—KERR, 2, Kendal Street, Kendal, Westmorland.

PETER JONES, Sloane Square, S.W.1, who by second-hand Linens, Curtains, Furniture, China and Glass, Trunks and Suitcases in good condition. Please write or telephone to the Department concerned. Sloane 3434.

WANTED to buy, large or small collections of oil paintings, in any condition.—VEAL AND COULTER, 33, Ainslie Avenue, York.

OTHER PROPERTY AND AUCTIONS. ADVERTISING PAGE 494.

COUNTRY LIFE

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MARCH 21, 1947



Pearl Freeman

MISS PRISCILLA BULLOCK

Miss Priscilla Bullock, the daughter of Captain Malcolm Bullock, M.P., and of the late Lady Victoria Bullock, is to be married on April 9 to Mr. Peter Hastings, son of the late the Hon. Aubrey Hastings and of the Hon. Mrs. Hastings

COUNTRY LIFE

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A GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY

SEVERAL hundred thousand ewes lost their lives in the recent blizzards, and this year's lamb crop will fall far short of expectations. Even on the lowland farms thousands of lambs born in February and early March perished in the cold. The shepherd never had a more trying lambing season. These losses in the flocks do not stand alone. Farmers were unable to touch the land for many weeks, and the spring sowing programme is seriously jeopardized. No one can estimate yet what the cost will be in crop output. In any event the country can ill-afford the loss of home food production in a year when we already have to anticipate an adverse balance of £350,000,000 in overseas trade.

In these circumstances the inertia of the Ministry of Agriculture must be strongly condemned. Farmers like Mr. Tom Williams; he impresses everyone he meets as a sincere man, has the interests of agriculture at heart. But he is too easy-going for these days, and he is allowing the agricultural industry a too easy pace. While the Economic Survey White Paper recognises that food production at home is second only to coal production as a national asset that must now be developed to the full, the Cabinet have apparently no clear policy for securing increased food production. The statement on prices made recently by Mr. Williams declared the importance of extra output, especially of pig meat and eggs, two items in our overseas purchases which come now mainly from the United States and Canada. Can these sources of supply be replaced before our credits with the United States and Canada are exhausted? The American loan will not last us much beyond the autumn of 1948. The Minister of Agriculture seems to see no hope of increasing our pigs and poultry until 1949 or 1950. But if the Government are really serious about the need for increased production at home, they could declare now to farmers that if they begin to increase numbers they will be allowed to keep for feeding to stock more of the grain that they themselves grow. The offer of higher prices for eggs and bacon pigs can avail little until the farmer can count on more feeding-stuffs.

The Ministry must know, too, how vital it is to full crop production to have ample supplies of fertilisers. Yet for the first time the permits issued to farmers for potash fertilisers cannot be honoured. At least a quarter of the potash farmers need to grow full crops of potatoes and fruit will be missing. The Minister has offered various excuses, but they will be little comfort next winter when the supplies are not there for housewives to buy.

Again, how comes it that agricultural machinery to the value of nearly £7,000,000 was exported last year, while the British farmer has to wait six months or longer for the new tractor

he urgently needs for ploughing and cultivating his land? It may be that some of the countries to which we are sending agricultural machinery will in due course send us some of the food that they produce, but it is folly to swell the export figures by sending out of the country capital equipment that we need here for full production.

The Government have not so far given the farming community any clear idea of the extra production that is wanted. Some cropping targets have been mentioned for this year and next year, but against the background of our economic plight they fall far short of real needs. The Government had not even made up their minds by the middle of March whether the grants for ploughing grass land should continue after the end of the month. Yet the country will be in greater need of maximum food production during the next two years than at any time during the war. The present Minister of Agriculture carries a grave responsibility.

THE MIGRANT

OUT of the sky
This redwing fell,
Lonely on the snow
To die.

Mote of music
Was her sigh,
As her elfin breath
Went free,
And the white wind
Tenderly
Closed her eye.

Hold in your hand
The empty shell
That once a joyous
Soul served well;
Light as the rusty

Leaves that blow
About the silence
Of the snow;
A tiny lyre
Its broken strings
Folded beneath
The moth-quiet wings.

What do we know
Of frailty?
Small things that
In their terror cower?
Hers was a separate
Agony,
Her life
A timorous flower.

EILEEN A. SOPER.

WHITE PAPER OR SELECT COMMITTEE?

THE Government have grown fond of the war-engendered practice of publishing the reports of their advisers as White Papers, and the White Paper promised on the subject of Service Training Demands for Land will no doubt be a somewhat bowdlerised edition of a report recently prepared for the Cabinet by the Interdepartmental Committee which has been examining the subject since last November. When this is published who is to have the unpleasant task of deciding which areas of outstanding beauty are to be spared completely, and which are to suffer wholly or in part? The Government's idea appears to be that a series of arbitrary decisions made by a committee of the Cabinet shall be published and reviewed piecemeal at a series of local public enquiries. We have pointed out again and again the unsatisfactory nature of such a proceeding. How much better, as Sir Norman Birkett suggests in a letter to *The Times*, to let all those concerned draw up their order of choice and let a joint select committee of both Houses—the most impartial and representative tribunal which can be found—resolve the contradictions in the way that seems to them best, hearing such evidence as they wish!

LOCATION OF MEMORIALS

A PROTEST against a war memorial statue in Westminster Abbey cloister, as likely to "disturb the calm of a priceless possession," raises two wider questions which were not really answered by the sculptor Mr. Gilbert Ledward's riposte that, but for the men of the submarines thus to be commemorated, there might have been no cloister to preserve. The issues are: Is there aesthetic justification for excluding contemporary (or any later) accretions from notable ancient buildings? And where are such contemporary memorials most appropriately to be placed? The same issue arose recently over a modern sculpture in Winchester Cathedral. To establish a hard and fast principle is not easy. It is wrong to sterilise old buildings, but much depends on the quality of the building and of the memorial. Any insertion in a notable building should be related both visually and in broad sentiment to its setting; but some buildings are such complete aesthetic unities that any

modern insertion is inappropriate—the R.A.F. memorial in Henry VII's Chapel perhaps infringes this principle. On the other hand, the nave and transept of the Abbey, and, regarded as a public passage, the cloister, are already so rich in sentimental accretions—to the extent of taking their aesthetic character from them rather than from their structure—that the insertion of a national memorial of related design is not inappropriate. But, on the second and broader question, it must be recognised not only that such shrines as the Abbey are already congested, but that the purpose of war memorials loses something by their being dispersed rather than concentrated, as, for instance, those of the Scottish National War Memorial.

FOUNTAINS ABBEY

THE plan to restore Fountains Abbey has wisely been dropped, at any rate for the present, by the group of Roman Catholics who sponsored it. They are to buy the site and accompanying buildings and, short of rebuilding, intend to carry out their project to bring back "a great historic Abbey to the use of religion," but the general public will continue to have access to the ruins. So far so good: no reasonable person will object to such a compromise. But the final step in allaying public uneasiness would be to hand over the ruins to the skilled guardianship of the Ministry of Works.

TIMBER NAMES

TECHNICAL names are a familiar object of mystification or indignation: people may goggle at such deceitful terms as "electric seal" or "Baltic tiger" for the humble rabbit-skin, and then they may goggle again at the precision of some scientific label, such as *Perdix perdix* for the common partridge. The timber trade would seem, according to the new British Standards publication on timber nomenclature, to be thoroughly tangled in both kinds of complication. For example, the word "cedar" has somehow become associated with several scented timbers of widely different kinds. The Lebanon cedar is the original—and it is a true cedar and therefore a "softwood." But the cedar of our pencils comes mostly from a juniper (also a "softwood"), while the cedar of cigar-boxes is provided by Central American hardwood trees. The cedars of shingles and the familiar wooden houses is yet another non-cedrous species, *Thuja plicata*—much nearer to a cypress than a cedar and quite different from the *Thuja* of antique veneers. Some true cypresses yield cedar wood and the timber of *Chamaecyparis nothofensis* is "yellow cedar." Much the same jolly confusion exists among the mahoganies and the eucalyptus trees: from the latter a timber merchant may saw an "oak," and "ash," or a "white mahogany"—and much else.

PUBLIC SNORING

FREQUENTERS of the public library at Ealing have, it appears, complained of an excess of noise which disturbs them in their studies; the old ladies talk too much and the old gentlemen snore too much. Doubtless both may be annoying, but there seems to be a gradation; those who cause a persistent murmur of conversation are surely the more infuriating because they do it of malice and forethought and could stop if they would, whereas the snorer is an involuntary offender. In one of George Gissing's books there is a tragical little story of a man put up in the washing department attached to the reading room at the British Museum, to the effect that it must only be used "for casual ablutions". That was doubtless necessary, if hard on some of the readers, but a reading room is the very place for casual slumbers. The tranquil atmosphere and a suitable book are calculated to send anyone to sleep. Borrow found a man snoring loudly in a meadow, who declared that that meadow combined with Wordsworth's poetry had completely cured him of insomnia, and a library can be equally beneficial. However, at Ealing it must not be, and anyone found guilty of that gentle music of the nose will be tapped on the shoulder by a hard-hearted attendant and told not to break the peace.

A COUNTRYMAN'S NOTES

By

Major C. S. JARVIS

AS I write we have just started the "general thaw with warmer weather" that our weather prophets so confidently predicted. Since it was responsible for half an inch of ice on the poultry water this morning and the "warmer weather" takes the form of a wicked nor-easter which causes the icicles on the trees to jingle, I am so glad it is not my task in life to be a weather prophet. I do like to give satisfaction occasionally and to be told that I am right.

Everybody and everything seem to be in a fishy temper to-day: the milkman refused to say his usual cheery good-morning; the gardener is banging down buckets and tools with violence; the electric light engine will not start; there are strange noises in the kitchen; I only just restrained myself from kicking the typewriter cover, which richly deserved it; and the birds' breakfast-table looks like the House of Commons at question time. So far as I can see not a single bird has managed to swallow a mouthful without being knocked for six either by one of his own species or by a member of some other.

* * *

I DO not think this intense ornithological irritation is caused entirely by the weather; it is probably due also to the unexpected arrival of two gate-crashing mistle-thrushes which the nor-easter has blown in. As all those who run birds' breakfast-tables know, the one fellow that no respectable birds' club will countenance for a moment is the mistle-thrush, but unfortunately on account of his size even a full hundred per cent. of black balls will not exclude him. I must admit that my sympathies are entirely with the old members, since I would hate to breakfast at the same cover with this blundering giant, who is so lacking in table and other manners.

* * *

"MARCH," says the old adage, "comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." This year March came in like one of the notorious man-eaters of Tsavo, and therefore by the law of averages should go out in that atmosphere of a gentle, balmy, primrose-dotted English spring about which poets write so glibly when they are living in Italy or Greece, and which I felt certain I was always missing when I suffered from a *khamisin* hot wind in Egypt, but which I am still waiting to experience.

Our newspapers, with the limited space at their disposal in which to enumerate the many evil effects of this unprecedented cold spell on coal production and factory work, tend to overlook the extremely serious situation on the farm. In the New Forest district of Hampshire, owing to the continued wet weather of November, December and early January, and the heavy frosts ever since, no ploughing or cultivation of any kind has been possible for over four months; grazing in the meadows consists only of dry frost-bitten grass without nourishment; and not only have all prospects of spring broccoli and spring cabbages vanished but the planting of early potatoes and other vegetables has been seriously delayed.

There are two types of weather expert to-day—those who endeavour to look into the future to predict what is coming to us, and those who explore old records in the hope of discovering evidence of years in the past that have been as bad as this. The latter category have, I imagine, packed up and gone on a holiday, for there is no prospect of finding anywhere either figures or script that will prove that anything like the early months of 1947 has ever occurred



WAITING FOR THE THAW

previously. The conclusion I have come to is that the Clerk of the Weather has very strong political views and that, being a confirmed Tory, he has by the summer of 1946 and the early part of 1947 endeavoured to demonstrate what he thinks of Socialism and nationalisation.

The only item one can put to the credit of the weather in these parts is that, all the accumulated farm-yard manure having been carted to the fields a month ago, the farmers with nothing else to do are engaged extensively on hedging and ditching, which, owing to the vicissitudes of war and shortage of labour, have been neglected entirely for nearly seven years. This may be useful work for the future well-being of the farm, but as cultivation and sowing should be in full swing at the present time, it is a bad augury for the future grain supplies in this country.

* * *

ONLY when there is freshly fallen snow all over the countryside is one able to imitate the Beduin and sally forth in the morning to read the news of the day from the footprints in the clean newsprint provided by Nature. The Beduin learns all that he requires to know from the various marks in the sand at the first light of dawn: the whereabouts of his grazing camels; the location of game, if any; the doings of his neighbours; and, what is most important of all, the movements of police patrols. In the same way, owing to repeated falls of snow, I have recently been able to obtain quite a lot of information about wild life concerning which I was in doubt previously.

Among other things, I have discovered that the rabbit is not quite extinct, as I had imagined, but that there is at least one pair of wily old survivors who, when the food shortage permits of a little expansion in the coney world, will rapidly re-populate the district. The rat situation was far worse than I had thought, for I learnt that the rodents had established themselves in at least three strong points in the vicinity of the poultry runs; however, owing to the information I obtained, I was able to shoot two as they came out at dusk to finish off anything the poultry had left. A rat against a white background of snow is very easily seen even when the light has nearly gone, and after these casualties the haunts were apparently evacuated, for no more tracks were seen. I think my holding has a reputation for unhealthiness among the local rat population.

* * *

IN the wood behind the house there is a fox earth of vast dimensions, with a front entrance leading into a spacious hall hung with feathers, scraps of fur and other sporting trophies, a back door which is not quite so pretentious and a most useful bolt-hole, which comes to the surface in the midst of a rhododendron clump. This earth is apparently what estate agents would call a highly desirable residence, and the only time I have known it unoccupied during the last ten years was when the East Surrey Regiment camped in the wood for six months, and most inconsiderately parked their regimental transport in the undergrowth on top of it. Immediately the battalion departed

to take part in the North African landing, the foxes returned and put the place in order again.

Examination of the freshly fallen snow around the earth on one of the recent cold mornings seems to show that there is a certain amount of social night-life in the animal world of which we are in ignorance. In addition to a visit from two foxes, a badger had gone into the earth as far as the entrance hall, a rabbit also had entered and had come away again, a stoat had wandered round the various exits, and at least two of our semi-wild cats had been taking an intelligent interest in the surroundings. As it seems most unlikely that the foxes would give a dinner party in these days when hens are severely rationed and rabbits nearly extinct, I can only conclude that the standard of honesty in the animal world is as low as that in our own, and that while the foxes were dining out, the other denizens of the wood came round to see if there was anything to be picked up during their absence.

* * *

A LABOUR M.P. has recently returned from a three-day visit to the guerrilla forces that are operating in the north of Greece, having found that everything he saw and heard was exactly what he had hoped it would be. The guerrillas are excellent fellows with many doctors, scientists and other highly-educated men in their ranks, their discipline is excellent, they are receiving no assistance from any foreign power and they are oppressed by an unpopular Government.

It has often occurred to me how very much more accommodating in this respect is the East—Near, Middle and Far—than the rest of the globe. If one goes to the East in search of

something, such as oil seepages in unlikely spots, manganese outcrops on mountains, secret societies dating back to the bad old Assassin days, or confirmation of one's preconceived political views, one is never disappointed.

Almost the first man one meets after stepping ashore is an interpreter, who by some lucky chance is an expert on, or in close touch with, whatever it is one is seeking, from buried treasure to underground movements. The oil man is taken to the oiliest patch of rock he has ever seen; the author who wants to write up secret societies attends a meeting of the veiled leaders of the gang in a cellar or a cave; while the optimistic enquirer who seeks to prove that a feeling of warm comradeship exists between the Jews and Arabs will be invited to attend a convivial party where representatives of the two races are singing the Hebrew and Arabic versions of "Jolly Old Pals" over glasses of *moustique*.

The motto of the East is always "Never disappoint an enquirer." In this respect there is no doubt that the Occident is far behind the Orient, and in this country we do nothing about the production of evidence to show foreign visitors that they are right in their opinions beyond affording convincing proof that we do not know how to make coffee.

* * *

AS I expected, I received a great number of letters from COUNTRY LIFE readers in response to a recent Note in which I described an episode that proved that a dog possessed the sixth sense. Among them is one that is so tragic that at first I hesitated to tell the story, but as it is unquestionably true and also of the

greatest interest, not only to dog-lovers but also to psychologists, I have changed my mind.

The dog in the sad story was a golden Labrador, and she and her master, whom we will call A, were on their way from London to shoot the following day in the south of England. They stopped for dinner at the house of a friend, B, who lived at about the half-way mark, and the Labrador also came in to take a meal. About 9 p.m., when A was about to start on the remainder of the journey, the Labrador could not be found anywhere. After a considerable search she was discovered crouching beneath B's bed in a room upstairs. Despite her adoration of her master, and her normal objection to being separated from him for a moment, she refused to move when called, and was finally dragged out by her collar. It was then necessary to carry her downstairs, and when she reached the car waiting outside nothing would induce her to jump in, though, in common with most dogs, she enjoyed motoring, and always cowered up in her special corner immediately the door was opened.

A was completely mystified by her behaviour, since she had never acted in that manner before. He said also that they had been out shooting that morning, and that she was perfectly fit in every way. The whole episode was quite unaccountable, as normally the car with the gun-case in the back evoked a display of the usual enthusiasm that all shooting dogs show when there is a prospect of sport in the near future. Finally, the very reluctant Labrador was lifted into the back seat and they started on their journey. Half an hour later the car overturned at a corner, and both A and his dog were burned to death.

SOME GEORGIAN SHOP-FRONTS

By PETER WALLIS

"CHAIN-TASTE," as the current commercial process of chromium-plated fascia-lifting of shop-fronts has been called, has already given the main streets of most towns a garish monotony. The old individuality and good taste have to be looked for in the side streets and villages. We need not regret the passing of thousands of late 19th-century horrors, but on the other hand the number of Georgian façades, already painfully small, dwindles year by year. Some have become part of the firm's goodwill and are secure. Fribourg and Treyer's in the Haymarket is an obvious instance, though the value of its renown could not prevent Birch's shop-front in Cornhill from finding its last resting-place in the mausoleum at South Kensington some years

before the war. Beach's chemist's shop at Bridport, in Dorset, familiar to thousands of holiday-makers, is well aware of the asset it holds in its delightful early 19th-century Gothic bow windows.

The keen eye can still find gems of this quality in old country towns. Some may be a little tarnished or may have lost a bit of their setting, like the shop at Abbey Green in Bath (Fig. 1), which must once have presented quite a dignified appearance in its modest way. The simple but graceful ironwork supporting the window and covering the area window is an unusual feature, most attractive when paired on the other side, as it would originally have been.

Georgian façades are of all shapes, but not

of all sizes. The mammoth Georgian shop-front does not exist, and almost certainly never did. A sweet reasonableness governs them all. They do not shout at the passer-by. Like Walt Whitman's animals, "they do not fret or whine about their condition," but are contentedly unassertive. If they must die, they do it gracefully, like faded old ladies, with quiet regret and as slowly as possible. Sometimes the original frames have gone, but as long as they are replaced by new ones of similar design, this is all that really matters.

One of the largest surviving must be the grocer's shop at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, (Fig. 2), which has a range of six windows divided by the entrance door. This front must have been added in the middle of George III's reign, as



1.—No. 2, ABBEY GREEN, BATH, WITH ITS BOW-FRONTED WINDOWS, STILL WEARS AN AIR OF DIGNITY.
(Right) 2.—"ONE OF THE LARGEST SURVIVING GEORGIAN FACADES MUST BE THE GROCER'S SHOP IN BURY ST. EDMUNDS" WHICH HAS A RANGE OF SIX WINDOWS DIVIDED BY THE ENTRANCE DOOR



3 and 4.—THE MODEST DOUBLE FRONT OF THE CHEMIST AND DRUGGIST'S IN MARKET STREET, LICHFIELD, IS MATCHED BY THAT OF THE SADDLER AND HARNESS MAKER'S SHOP IN THE SAME TOWN

the building is a gabled structure probably of the Tudor period. Plain but elegant pilasters flank these windows, whose slender glazing bars form a series of miniature pointed arches within the rounded major arch of each window head. More modest is the double bow-windowed front of the Chemist and Druggist at Lichfield Staffordshire, (Fig. 3), matched by the Saddler and Harness Maker's shop (Fig. 4). This has a fanlight of stock design, whose excellence is a testimony to the high level of taste in Georgian mass-produced fittings. Pattern books of the period, produced largely for the country workman, are full of such good things. There is something appropriate about these gracious façades going hand-in-hand with trades such as the saddler's; they both belong to an age that is almost gone. Frequently such shops seem to be waiting to be taken over by an antique dealer in search of premises with "atmosphere." When this happens they lose their close contact with the pulsing rhythm of the local workaday world and become as much *objets d'art* as the

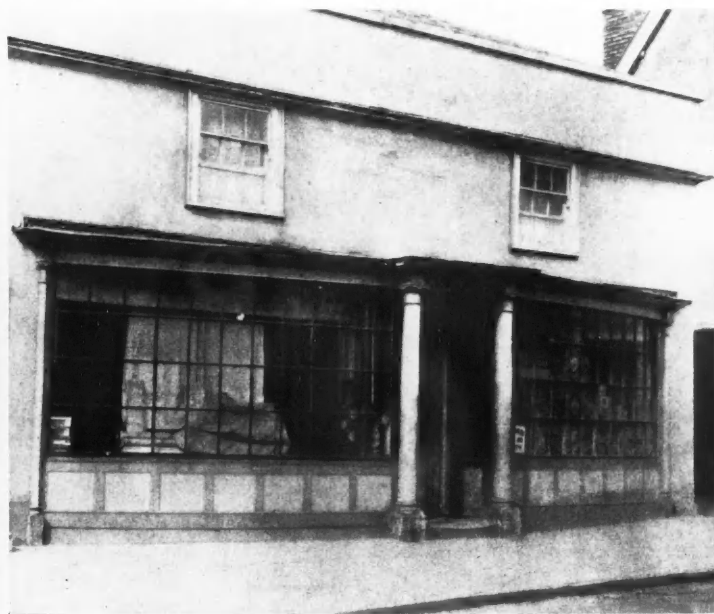
precious things they so courteously shelter. They resign themselves to relying on appearances alone for their justification, a pathetic end for a building.

East Anglia has kept a good many of its early shop-fronts, owing largely to its rural nature. At Cley, in Norfolk, occurs an excellent example (Fig. 5). Here the entrance is reached by a small flight of steps, which leads also to a little raised balcony, running the whole length of the front, from which one can either window-gaze or mount one's horse. At Needham Market, in Suffolk (that unknown county to 19 people out of 20, and thereby—dare one say it?—so much the pleasanter), another double front survives (Fig. 6) of a shop combining the business of grocer and upholsterer. Here the windows gradually inch their way forward, encroaching more and more on the pavement towards the centre to meet the graceful columns of the porch. In this discreet manner any suggestion of flatness in the general effect is avoided.

There was, and possibly still is, a some-

what similar but more elaborate example at Boxford, also in Suffolk, with a fine hood about 25 ft. long resting on three columns at the edge of the causeway. Just in the entrance was a small permanent seat contemporary with the rest of the woodwork, a friendly touch none would think of nowadays. These broad windows certainly give the shop-keeper's assistant plenty to think about when it comes to cleaning them. There are 44 panes in each of the Needham Market examples.

An unorthodox effect is created at Stamford, Lincolnshire (Fig. 7) by relegating the bow window to the first floor so that it rests benignly on the shoulders of the windows below, while near by a charming front enhances the treasures of our friend the antique dealer (Fig. 8). Queen Street, in Bath, once one of the city's main streets, preserves much of the appearance of a Georgian shopping street (Fig. 10). Here one sees the vista of small flat fronts, which give the street unusual attraction from the hesitant way they overhang the pavement, as if apologising



5.—A NOTABLE FEATURE OF AN EXCELLENT FACADE AT CLEY, NORFOLK, IS THE RAISED BALCONY FROM WHICH ONE CAN EITHER WINDOW-GAZE OR MOUNT ONE'S HORSE. (Right) 6.—EACH OF THE WINDOWS OF THE COMBINED GROCER'S AND UPHOLSTERER'S SHOP AT NEEDHAM MARKET, SUFFOLK, HAS FORTY-FOUR PANES



7.—AT A SHOP IN ST. MARY'S STREET, STAMFORD, A DELIGHTFULLY UNORTHODOX EFFECT IS CREATED BY RELEGATING THE BOW WINDOW TO THE FIRST FLOOR. (Middle) 8.—THE ANTIQUE DEALER'S SHOP NEAR BY. (Right) 9.—SOME OF THE OLD SHOP-FRONTS IN GRAPE LANE, WHITBY, "PRODUCE A CURIOUSLY UNDULATING EFFECT SEEN FROM ONE SIDE"

for taking up even a foot of room in such a confined space. Individually there is, perhaps, not much to be said for them. It is their neighbourly sense of fitness that makes them attractive as a group. They are modest and would not have it otherwise.

Many interesting old shop-fronts in a minor key are to be found in the fascinating and historic town of Whitby, on the Yorkshire coast. Some of those in Grape Lane (Fig. 9) produce a curiously undulating effect seen from one side. At the other end of the county, at Knaresborough (Fig. 11), is one of the most interesting specimens still in daily use, the bow windows and entrance door each flanked by pilasters deriving from Soane's Bank of England work, and a pair of thin, fluted columns thrown in to add to the medley. Yet one cannot deny the charm of the whole ensemble, which represents metropolitan elegance seen through the eyes of a small and remote provincial town.

It was possible until fairly recently to get an excellent idea of what an 18th-century shopping street looked like at the height of its prosperity by going to the Hull Museum, where

many examples from all over the country were sent to preserve them from destruction at the hands of the house-breaker. Unfortunately, this only made them an easy target for German

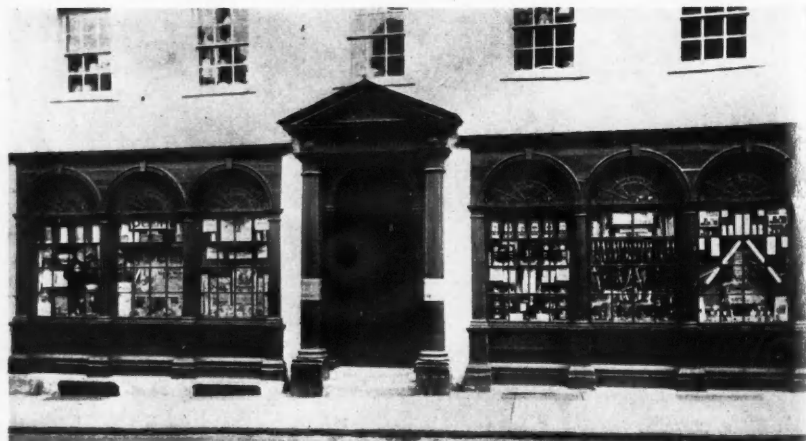
bombs, and little is left. One of the most grievous losses at Hull was the wonderful shop-front from Lewes, in Sussex (Fig. 12). This had been saved through a strenuous local effort about 10 years ago, when the rest of the building was modernised. It was thought that by this means it had been retained for the delight of future generations, but alas! it was sent to its doom.

The true flavour of the Georgian era can be recognised in the humble shop-front. There are certain overtones that are not immediately apparent, but they are there all the same by implication, if not by direct statement. This kind of architecture obviously cannot pretend to greatness. Rather is it complementary to greatness, content to leave the main theme in the architectural symphony to the cellos and horns of Houghton and Holkham, Norfolk, playing its own part discreetly on the piccolo, or even, maybe, on the triangle, but doing it gracefully and well.

Thanks are due to the National Buildings Record for permission to publish the photographs illustrating this article.



10.—QUEEN STREET, BATH, PRESERVES MUCH OF THE APPEARANCE OF A GEORGIAN SHOPPING STREET



11.—"METROPOLITAN ELEGANCE SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF A SMALL AND REMOTE PROVINCIAL TOWN" IS EXEMPLIFIED IN A FACADE IN HIGH STREET, KNARESBOROUGH. (Right) 12.—AMONG THE FINE SHOP-FRONTS SENT TO HULL MUSEUM FOR SAFETY AND DESTROYED BY AIR ATTACK DURING THE WAR WAS ONE FROM LEWES, SUSSEX

INOFFENSIVE FLIES

By HAROLD OLDROYD

A GREAT deal is heard about the unpleasantness of flies. Everyone has read of mosquitoes and malaria, of tsetse flies and sleeping sickness, of houseflies and their attendant list of vague, but sinister, infections.

This is an article about the "neutral" flies. Regrettably, there are few flies which can be pointed out as really benevolent or useful to mankind, but in Britain only about one species of fly in forty bites man or domestic animals or is known to spread disease. For the most part they live inconspicuously. Many of them are striking in appearance or habits and all of them, once their life-histories and relationships begin to be known, provide most fascinating subjects for study. Most insects have four wings. The natural order *Diptera*, or true flies, is distinguished by using only the first pair of wings for flight, and having the hind pair reduced to knobbed organs known as halteres or "balancers." This definition excludes many insects commonly called flies, such as the various kinds of fishing "flies," may-flies, stone-flies, dragon-flies, or even ichneumon flies. Even so, over five thousand species of true flies, about one-tenth of the world total, are found in the British Isles.

All true flies hatch as a larva, which is a legless grub or maggot totally different in appearance and habits from the adult fly. The majority of fly larvae live on decaying animal or vegetable matter and are found in water, in the soil, in decaying vegetation or in rotting meat, while some have become carnivorous and feed upon other larvae. As scavengers they play an essential part in the natural cycle of life, death and decay. Those flies which come to notice as pests are often isolated species which have transferred their attention to field crops or garden plants, or adults which have appeared suddenly in large numbers and have swarmed into a building.

The flies are divided into three main groups, or sub-orders, the first of which is called *Nematocera* the members of which are distinguished by having antennae or feelers of many segments often long and whip-like. These are the most primitive, i.e. the least highly evolved, flies, and include all the midges and gnats with their fragile, soft-bodied, slenderly built forms and gauzy, delicate wings. The family *Tipulidae*—crane-flies or daddy-long-legs—belong to this group; their larvae live in soil or rotting wood, and some of the bigger ones are well known to farmers and green-keepers as leather-jackets, but the majority live harmlessly in the fields and hedgerows. Near relatives are the *Trichoceridae* or winter-gnats—fragile ghostlike forms seen dancing silently in the winter sunshine. St. Mark's fly (*Bibio marci*), a shining black species with powerful spurred legs and a big, spherical head, gets its name through being on the wing on, or soon after, St. Mark's Day (April 25).

The *Mycetophilidae* or "fungus-gnats" are slender—fragile flies with long and thread-like antennae, and the numerous species of this family are very difficult to distinguish, even under the microscope. They breed in all kinds of fungoid growth and decaying vegetation, and any fragment of garden crops kept in a closed jar will usually yield a number of them.

The larvae of the *Cecidomyiidae* or "gall-midges" bore into the tissue of plants which, in response to the irritation, set up a hard swelling or gall. When the plant affected is a field or garden crop the fly becomes a pest. In contrast, many larvae of the family *Chironomidae* live in slow-flowing or stagnant water. Blood-worms are larvae of this family which possess a red pigment (haemoglobin) in order to

absorb oxygen from very foul water. Adult *Chironomidae* are the familiar midges whose evening dance near water is taken as a sign of fine weather to come.

The second main group of flies, the *Brachycera*, includes the biggest and most spectacular species, the finest of which are only found in the tropics. The *Stratiomyidae* (Fig. a), called soldier-flies or "armoured flies" on account of the spines they bear on the thorax, are flower-feeders and are found resting on foliage. Their larvae live in soil or water, and are often carnivorous. The *Bombyliidae*, or bee-flies (Figs. d and e) also feed on flowers, sometimes inserting a long proboscis into the bloom. *Bombylius major* (Fig. d) is a common visitor

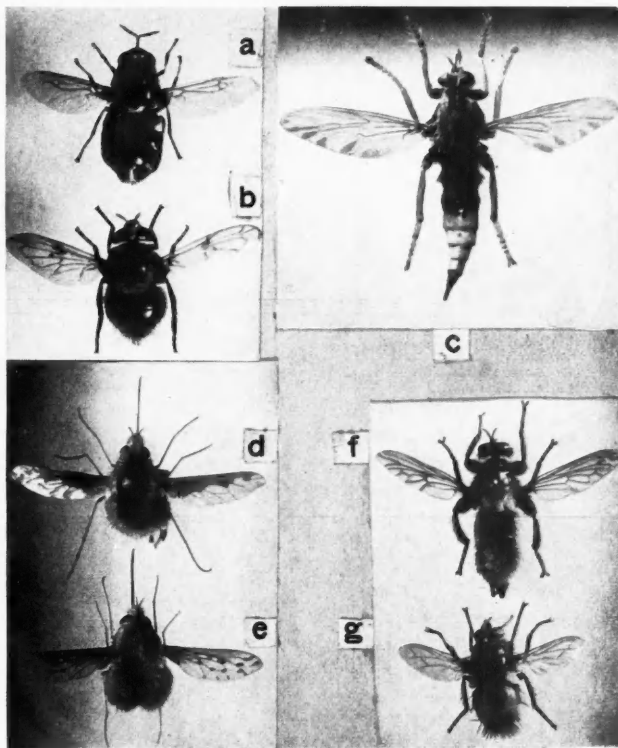
tiny, metallic green or blue flies to be seen in great numbers on leaves and grass in wet hedges, overhanging ditches, or round the edges of ponds belong to the family *Dolichopodidae*, a rather neglected family that offers a fruitful field of study.

The third great division of flies, the *Cyclorrhapha*, includes the stoutly built, bristly flies at the opposite end of the evolutionary scale from the slender, fragile midges. The *Syrphidae* or hover-flies are familiar to many people and are favourites with amateur collectors. Some are friends of the gardener, since their larvae eat the green-fly on his roses, while others, less popular, have larvae which attack bulbs. The drone-fly, *Eristalis*, has a rat-tailed maggot equipped with a long breathing tube that enables the larva to exist in very foul and stagnant water.

The housefly and bluebottle also belong to this group, as do the sheep-blow-fly, the warble-fly, the sheep-noset-fly and the deer bot-fly. Closely related to these are the *Tachinidae* (Fig. g), whose larvae feed inside the larvae of other insects and destroy them. In this way they are often directly beneficial, and some species have been specially bred to help in controlling pests. *Pollenia rudis*, the "cluster-fly," is often seen in houses and may be recognised by the way it closes its wings, like a pair of scissors. It is exceptional in that its larva lives in an earthworm. The *Anthomyiidae* include a number of flies that superficially resemble the true housefly (*Musca domestica*) but may be distinguished from it by the absence of the sharply angled vein of the wing. Mostly they breed in small accumulations of animal dung in the fields.

Here, also, belong a host of small or minute flies known as *Muscidae* *Acalyptridae*, the classification of which is a matter of some difficulty. Certain families are fairly easily recognised, such as the *Trypetidae*, plant-breeding species, which often have strongly patterned wings. The *Agromyzidae* include many leaf-mining species whose larvae make tunnels in the leaves of trees and shrubs. *Phytomyza ilicis* makes the branching tunnels so often seen in leaves of the holly, while *Sepsis* (family *Sepsidae*), a tiny fly with a black spot on each wing, may be found among the roots of heather. The family *Borboridae* are recognised by a swollen joint of the hind legs, and the *Drosophilidae* are small plump fruit-flies, often pale yellow in colour with red eyes. Certain species of *Drosophila* are tropical in origin, but have become thoroughly domesticated and have spread wherever there are kitchens and warm places in which the flies can develop. In this group, too, are a number of shore-living flies, the family *Ephydriidae* and some *Coelopidae*. *Coelopa frigida* is a very bristly fly that breeds in seaweed and is sometimes an annoyance in coastal towns, showing a curious liking for swarming into chemists' shops.

At the end of the list of flies come those curious parasitic flies that live on mammals, birds or bats, and in consequence have reduced or lost their powers of flight. This group are known as *Pupipara* because they nourish the young larvae within the body until they mature, so that when released the larva almost immediately forms a pupa. These flies spend their lives crawling about in fur or feather, and sometimes stray into houses in the country. Although parasitic and bloodsucking they hardly rank as a major pest, and so may properly claim admittance to the company of "neutral" flies.



BRITISH FLIES, ALL LIFE-SIZE.

a.—Soldier-fly (*Stratiomys furcata*); b.—Hover-fly (*Volucella bombylans*); c.—Robber-fly (*Asilus crabroniformis*); d. and e.—Bee-flies (*Bombylius major* and *Bombylius discolor*); f.—Robber-fly (*Laphria flava*); g.—Tachinid fly (*Gonia capitata*)

to primroses in the south of England. The larvae of bee-flies are of special interest because some are parasitic on solitary bees and wasps and others on grasshoppers and locusts, beetles or moths.

Although relatively large and conspicuous the twenty-seven British species of *Asilidae* or robber-flies (Fig. c) are little noticed. It has been said that they should properly be called "assassin-flies," since they lie in wait on a stick or stone and chase other insects which fly past.

When the victim is overtaken it is instantly engulfed in the powerful, bristly legs of the robber-fly, which pierces its prey with a horny proboscis and quickly sucks it until it is no more than an empty shell. The *Empididae* or "dance-flies" have similarly predatory habits and are further remarkable for their behaviour when courting. In many species the male offers prey to the female before pairing, though sometimes this action is a mere formality in which a seed or similar object is offered instead of real food.

In the genus *Hilara*, those tiny black flies often seen dancing in clouds close to the surface of ponds, the male possesses special glands in the legs from which he spins a ball of silk to offer to his mate. Those small, often

THE MAD EARL AT HIGH LODGE

By DAVID GREEN

MOST people when they think of Blenheim visualise what Lady Eleanor Smith called "that golden Italian palace, situated so majestically in greenly rolling English countryside." They remember Capability Brown's gargantuan lake and cascades, and see, surveying it all from the 130-foot height of his Doric column, the bronze of Handsome Jack Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, the torch of victory in his raised right hand.

But there is another, wilder side to the Park, the western side, where hollow oaks stand deep in bracken and where, except for the absence of deer, the landscape can have changed little since John Wilmot, second Earl of Rochester, lived there as Comptroller of Woodstock Park and (when he had offended Charles II beyond even that most lenient of monarchs' forbearance) as exiled tenant of the small, remote and rather formidable looking hunting-box known as High Lodge. The Lodge, now a Gothicked relic with bricked-in windows and a machicolated tower, is not open to the public. Part of it is lived in, and in the rest there is little to see save some decaying stags' heads and what remains of the four-poster with its coarse and somehow sinister yellow hangings, within which the earl died at two in the morning on July 26, 1680, at the age of thirty-three.

It is pleasanter to walk beside the large pond in which the north-west corner of the Lodge is reflected, or to look from the front of the building south-eastward and, if one's sight be keen enough, make out the spires and domes of Oxford some eight miles off. That view in itself, one would say, might make a man poet, and indeed in one at least of Rochester's tamer passages one suspects a veiled reference to his lofty and lonely place of banishment:

When, wearied with a world of woe,

To thy safe bosom I retire,
Where love, and peace, and truth
does flow,

May I contented there expire!

He is reported to have said that each time he reached Brentford on his way to London the Devil entered into him and never left him till he came to the country again.

Rochester was country-born, at Ditchley in Oxfordshire, in April, 1647, and did so well at Burford Grammar School that at the age of thirteen he was solemnly writing (not, it is suspected, without assistance) to His Sacred Majesty On His Restoration:

And though my youth, not patient yet to bear
The weight of arms, denies me to appear
In steel before you; yet, great Sir, approve
My manly wishes and more vigorous love.

At fourteen he took his M.A. at Wadham, and having, as it were, exhausted Oxford, travelled with a tutor in Italy and France, studying as he went to such effect that while still in his 'teens he established a reputation, for what it was worth in those days, as the greatest scholar among all the nobility. In a less licentious reign than Charles II's he might well have maintained it. As it was, "of a graceful and well shaped person, tall and well made if not a little too slender; exactly well bred; his conversation easy and obliging, with a strange vivacity of thought and vigour of expression" (vide Bishop Burnet), he at once found favour at Court and, after serving a while with the fleet and distinguishing himself against the Dutch by "uncommon intrepidity," was made a Gentleman of the Bedchamber and,

in time, Comptroller of Woodstock Park and Keeper of the King's Hawks.

So far, so good. But it was, as Dr. Burnet does not need to remind us, "a loose and lewd age," and turning to Johnson's *Lives* we find that as Rochester "excelled in that noisy and licentious merriment which wine incites, his companions eagerly encouraged him in excess and he willingly indulged in it till, as he confessed to Dr. Burnet, he was for five years together continually drunk or so much inflamed by frequent ebriety as in no instance to be master of himself."

Certainly it is obvious that on many an

into the country," he wrote mockingly to his friend Henry Savile, "where, only, one can think; for you at Court think not at all; or at least, as if you were shut up in a Drum; as you think of nothing but the Noise that is made about you, I have made many Serious Reflections . . ." But in spite of his country upbringing and his many sojourns on the wooded hill, there is nothing to suggest that, as a man, he was anything more rurally inclined than a sophisticated courtier and one far from content with long periods of exile in the midst of a deer forest where it is likely that few of his kind took the trouble to seek him out. He begs "dear

Harry" (Savile) "to contrive such a Crew together as may not be ashamed of passing by Woodstock," and implores him, "as a note with a distinctly up-to-date flavour, to use his influence for procuring him the best wine in town."

Rochester, of course, was by no means the only one of his circle to find libel (except upon oneself) amusing. It was enough for him to leave the Court, whether in disgrace or not, for Woodstock, to set a multitude of tongues wagging, so that everything he did, however patently blameless, became cause for scandal among courtiers incapable and unwishful of talking and thinking anything else. One such rumour spoke of his having run about Woodstock Park with his friends, "naked and on the Sabbath." Even Savile, one of his few remaining friends, was a little shocked and taxed him with it. "For the hideous Deportment which you have heard of," Rochester answers (and one can almost hear his sigh), "so much is true, that we went into the River somewhat late in the Year, and had a Frisk for forty yards in the Meadow, to dry ourselves. I will appeal to the King and the Duke, if they had not done as much; nay, my Lord-Chancellor and the Archbishops both, when they were Schoolboys?"

In a love-letter, written at about the same time, Rochester commends himself to the lady as "the wildest and most fantastical odd Man alive." Undoubtedly he was at all times very much alive, his short life packed with living, for all Johnson's famous dictum when, referring to Burnet's *Some Passages in the Life and Death of the Earl of Rochester*, he remarked, "We have a good death. There is not much life." But it was Johnson who "found in all his works sprightliness and vigour and . . . tokens of a mind which study might have carried to excellence. The strongest effort of his Muse is his poem upon Nothing."

As a man of family (there were three daughters and a son) Rochester was by no means a pattern. His "most neglected wife," Elizabeth Mallet, a Papist, was not only for months at a time denied the company of her lord but treated to that of his mother, a Puritan of very determined mind. The letters from Rochester to Elizabeth are brief and full of excuses. Such of hers to him as survive read pitifully. "I am confident you will find so much business," she writes from Adderbury (near Banbury), where she seems to have spent most of her time, "as will not allow you to come into the country therefore pray lay your commands upon me what I am to do and though it be to forget my children and the long hopes I have lived in of seeing you, yet I will endeavour to obey you or in the memory only torment my self without giving you the trouble of putting you in mind



JOHN WILMOT, SECOND EARL OF ROCHESTER. A painting in the National Portrait Gallery, attributed to J. Huysmans

occasion wine and a doubtful sense of humour got the better of the earl's otherwise excellent intellect and good sense. It was amusing enough to proffer one's laurels to the monkey and be painted so; to masquerade as a tinker at Burford (he knocked the bottoms out of their kettles but sent them new ones), or, in the manner of Volpone, as a London mountebank; and no doubt it diverted him to be known in consequence as the mad Earl. Less funny were the more vicious and violent of his pranks (for instance the beating-up of Dryden in Covent Garden) and the more schoolboyish of his verses aimed at the King. As each new piece of ribaldry made its circuitous way towards its royal objective, bags would be packed and the coach got ready in anticipation of yet another enforced sixty-mile journey, over terrible roads, to High Lodge for him who came to sign himself "your Country Acquaintance." Yet again he would, says Johnson, "retire into the country and amuse himself with writing libels in which he did not pretend to confine himself to truth."

On an average these dismissals from Court are said to have occurred once a year. Yet exile for a poet may not be all loss. "Since I came

that their lives such a creature as your faithful humble . . ."

Rochester had been on his way to his wife's estate in Somerset when, while on horseback, he was overcome by violent pain and forced to turn back. Suffering from internal inflammation, "with very great difficulty he endured a return to the Ranger's Lodge at Woodstock, by coach." It was April, 1680, but although he was gravely ill there was still the same flippant sprightliness in his letters to Henry Savile. "It is a miraculous thing," he remarks, "when a Man half in the Grave cannot leave off playing the Fool and the Buffoon; but so it falls out to my Comfort: for at this Moment I am in a damn'd Relapse brought on by a Fever, the Stone and some ten Diseases more, which have deprived me of the Power of crawling, which I happily enjoy'd some Days ago; and now I fear I must fall, that it may be fulfilled which was long since written for Instruction in a good old Ballad:

*But he who lives not Wise and Sober
Falls with the Leaf still in October,*

About which time, in all probability, there may be a period added to the ridiculous being of your humble Servant,
ROCHESTER."

His mind had, however, its serious side. Much of the previous winter he had spent cloistered with his old friend Bishop Burnet, and,

although at that time discussion on religious belief had failed to convince him, he had clearly given much thought to it, both then and since. It is not altogether surprising, then, that on June 25, "with his own Hand, at Twelve at Night," the wretched earl wrote from High Lodge his urgent and celebrated last letter to Burnet, "valuing Churchmen above all Men in the World" and begging him to hurry to his bedside forthwith.

Burnet answered the summons promptly, and had the satisfaction of witnessing Rochester's deathbed confession and repentance to which he (the bishop) attested the sincerity. Rochester had, says Burnet, "run round the whole circle of luxury," a vivid phrase outshone only by that of the great Doctor himself. Rochester, says Johnson, "blazed out his youth and his health in lavish voluptuousness till he had exhausted the fund of life and reduced himself to a state of weakness and decay."

In another old book we get a glimpse of the two medical men in attendance, Shorter and Radcliffe, "walking together in Woodstock Park and discoursing touching his Lordship's condition, which they agreed to be past remedy . . . Dr. Shorter, fetching a very deep sigh, said, 'Well, I can do him nothing, but he has done me a great deal.'" (The rake reformed had turned evangelist.)

Both Countesses, wife and mother, were at

the bedside, and towards the end Rochester, according to his confessor, "expressed so much tenderness and kindness to his lady that as it easily effaced the remembrance of everything wherein he had been in fault formerly, so it drew from her the most passionate care and concern for him that was possible."

Of the final scene St. Evremont records:

The continual Course of Drinking and a perpetual Decay of his Spirits in Love and Writing had entirely broken his Constitution and brought him into a Consumption of which after a lingering Sickness, he died at the Lodge in Woodstock Park on the 26th of July, 1680, at Two in the Morning, without any Pangs at all, Nature being spent and all the Food of Life quite gone, in the third and thirtieth Year of his Age.

As the earl lay dying he directed that the *History of the Intrigues of the Court*, which he had been writing, should be burned, and this was done. Some, including Horace Walpole, have thought it a pity that the same fate was not meted out to the whole of Rochester's works. Others, Johnson among them, found some at least promising, and as he says, "What more can be expected of a life spent in ostentatious contempt of regularity and ended before the abilities of many other men began to be displayed?"



HIGH LODGE, WOODSTOCK PARK, THE MAD EARL'S OXFORDSHIRE RETREAT. A drawing by John Piper



1.—ENTERING THE HIGH STREET FROM THE WEST

OLD TOWNS RE-VISITED—XX

ASHWELL, HERTFORDSHIRE—I

In Saxon times an important town. Ashwell is now a little-known but singularly perfect example of a big mediæval village, still largely surrounded by open fields and dominated by its magnificent 14th-century church

By CHRISTOPHER HUSSEY



THOUGH Ashwell has been included within the county formed around the fortress of Hertford by King Edward the Elder in 913, geographically it belongs to Bedfordshire or Cambridgeshire which, together, almost surround the peninsula of Hertfordshire containing the parish. The reason for its attachment may have been to include, as a defensible outpost to Hertford, the old fort called Arbury, just above the Ash Well (Fig. 4), beside which the East Saxons transferred the community; or it may have been because the manor had been given by King Egbert to the Abbots of Westminster—who remained its lords till the Dissolution. However that may be, by the time of the Norman Conquest Ashwell was the sixth town in the county, with fourteen burgesses, a market, and four annual fairs. This importance must have been due to its position adjoining the Icknield Way, and as a market centre for the rich, flat, agricultural land around, when the range of transport was small. These conditions persisted into the 14th century, as is shown by the rebuilding of the immense church at that time. But before this was finished the community suffered very severely from the Black Death (1350-60) which literally left marks still visible, and resulted in Ashwell's pre-eminence (probably already declining) passing to Baldock on one side and Royston on the other—at intersections of the Icknield Way with the North Road and Ermine Street respectively. Ashwell never recovered its former importance, though the natural fertility of its barley lands ensured sufficient prosperity for a group of substantial houses to be built in the 15th century, and for their inhabitants to form several guilds, that of St. John the Baptist being the most notable. Malting barley and making saltpetre from pig droppings preserved the mediæval condition of the town, which the turnpikes and then the railways passed by, till the close of the 19th century, neither increasing nor much diminishing it, had not a disastrous fire destroyed nearly half the houses in 1850. Though this calamity was such as to justify public subscription for relief of the homeless, it seems fortunately not to have destroyed any buildings of note.

So it comes about that Ashwell has scarcely changed its essential appearance since 1500. Approached across

2.—THE GREAT TOWER OF ASHWELL CHURCH AND THE LYCH GATE

the rolling plain from the north-west, the beautiful tower and slender steeple are seen from afar rising from a cluster of elms and roofs set among huge unenclosed arable fields. Ashwell Street, a very ancient road parallel to the Icknield Way, skirts the village and runs for some miles in the direction of Cambridge. The town plan consists of four east-west streets connected by three north-south streets, one of which, Mill Street, encircles the church. The Saxon market-place has been encroached on by later mediaeval houses, but the broad west half of High Street (Fig. 11) and the upper part of Mill Street (Figs. 5, 6) probably represent parts of it. The former is lined by a succession of 15th-century or earlier hall-houses (Fig. 11). The eastern half of High Street is narrower, the houses on its north side (rebuilt after 1850) representing the encroachments on the market-place. But on the south side, which originally overlooked it, there is a timbered range (Fig. 9) with remains of pargetted decoration dated 1681, which is probably St. John's Guildhall. It has recently been acquired by Mrs. John Beresford for the restoration that its fine quality merits. It was evidently at one time a single building, since the dividing partitions are thin lath and plaster, and the structural beams are continuous. One of the tenements has long been known as the Guildhouse; in 1571 Andrew Bill, of a family of Ashwell drapers, lawyers, and divines, surrendered to Nicolas West "a house situated in the High Street called le Guildhouse or St. John's House or le Brotherhood-house."

At the east end the street passes above the springs that give Ashwell its name and form the River Rhee, principal source of the Cam (Fig. 4). In 1100 Chauncy, the county's earliest historian, described the thirty-three springs "that drain through small veins out of a rock of stone shaded on every side with tall ash-trees," into a clear gravelly pool. The scene is still the same, and can have changed little in the 1,500 years since the Saxon settlers called their village after the ash-shaded well. It must constitute an almost unique instance in England of a natural and botanical feature remaining essentially as it was in the dawn of place-names; certainly few English rivers have a more impressive or picturesque source than the Cam. "Ashwell Head Water Cress" used to be a familiar old London cry.

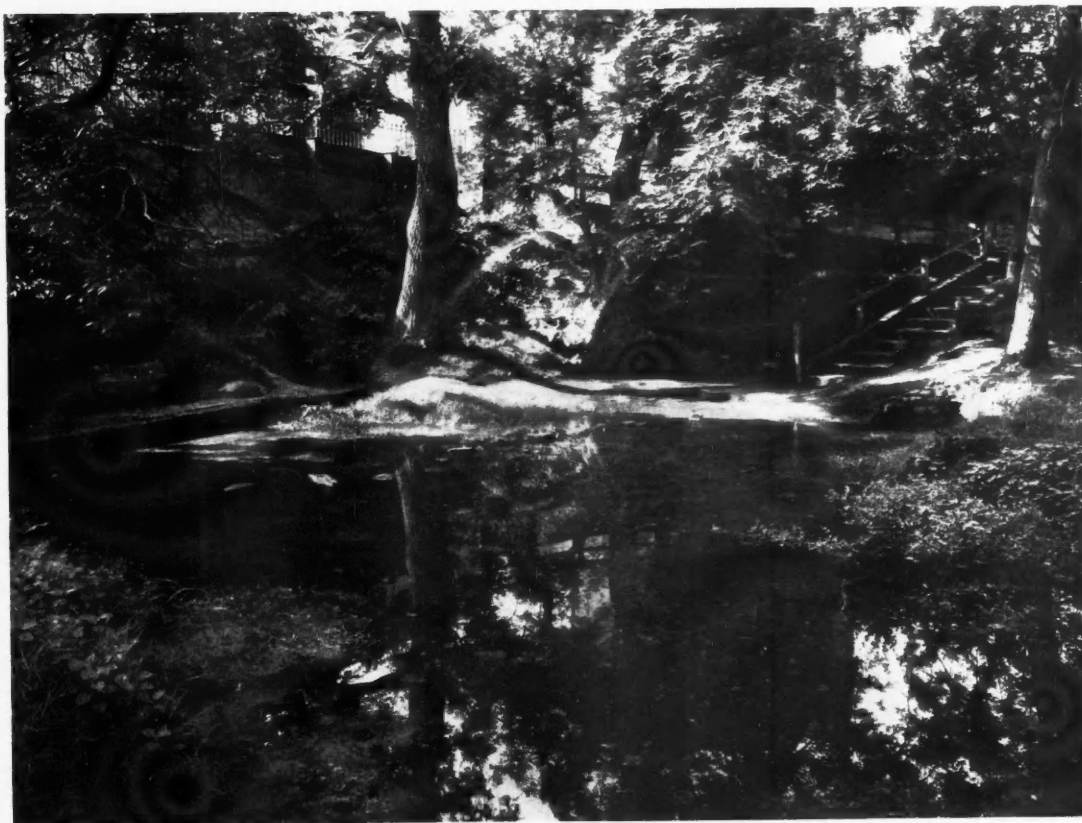
The stream thus born half encircles the church and worked the mill to the north of it that existed at Domesday, before flowing away into Cambridgeshire. We, however, will retrace our steps to the great church, looking more carefully at some of the buildings on the way.

One aspect of the village worth noting is its closely nucleated lay-out, with the church, vicarage, and Bury (as the manor house is so frequently called in Hertfordshire) all adjoining and surrounded by its fields; in contrast to the scattered type of village associated with Celtic or forest origins, and the ribbon growth of later highway villages. Nuclear arrangement is not only characteristic of Saxon settlement, but of ecclesiastical manors of which the lord was non-resident, as in this case; i.e. the lord did not build the church on his demesne land at some distance from the village.

The quantity of mediaeval domestic building, extending to whole groups, has already been noted. It is certainly rare to find, as



3.—ASHWELL CHURCH, THE REBUILDING OF WHICH WAS INTERRUPTED BY THE BLACK DEATH (1350-60)



4.—THE ASH WELL, SOURCE OF THE RIVER RHEE, CHIEF SOURCE OF THE CAM



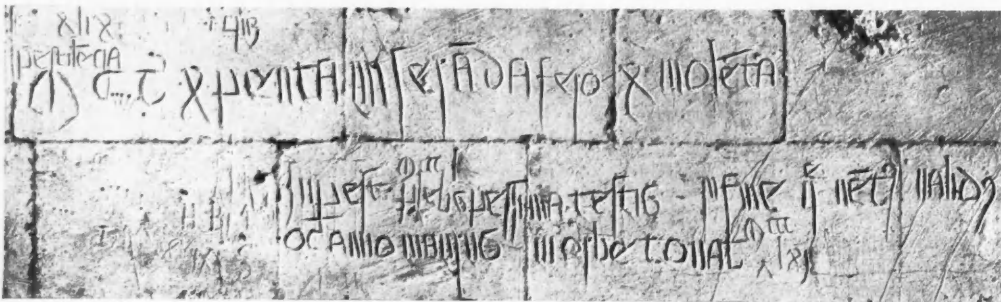
6.—LOOKING DOWN MILL STREET

(Left) 5.—IN MILL STREET. THE LYCH GATE BUILT ABOUT 1450

in Fig. 11, three yeomen's hall-houses in a row and so comparatively little altered. The series extends more or less continuously, with barns and yards interpolated, to the west entrance to the village where the Chantry House, alias the British Queen Inn, on the right of Fig. 1, is a 15th-century building with

thatched roof and a stone two-light window. The practice of covering the timber construction with a plaster skin, periodically coloured with lime-wash, was regarded in the Middle Ages as a protection against fire as well as the weather. It is still traditional at Ashwell. Most of the old houses gleam with white or cream washes that also serve to enhance their plastic texture in contrast to the thatch or russet velvet of their tiled roofs. In many cases the walls are probably of cob or clay bats, which is the material of numerous thatched enclosure walls in the village. An unusually gay butcher's shop is quite in harmony with this clean, light, colour scheme (Fig. 12). Mr. Dennis's fascia-board, with scarlet and gold lettering, carries a bull's head proper illustrating "prime ox beef," and rests on a canopy carrying tubs of topiary from which hang baskets of red geraniums. When the shutters are down and godly pink carcasses are seen hanging up within the clean tiled surround, the needs of commerce and the eye seem to me both satisfied. If chin-stores and other shops showed as much cheerful imagination—and some sense of what is appropriate to varied positions—country towns would be less vulgarly monotonous.

Leaving the colourful butcher we turn to go down Mill Street—referred to in about 1300 as Le Mulneset—and the full beauty of the church tower begins to reveal itself (Fig. 2). Its great height, 176 ft., accentuated by the needle-like spire (Sir Edwin Lutyens compared the little flying buttresses round it to dancing angels), is further emphasised by the sharp lines and set-off of the buttresses which give it a diminishing silhouette, and by the tall lancets in the upper half contrasting with the solid base. It is one of the only two Hertfordshire towers entirely



7.—"WRETCHED WILD DISTRACTED 1350!"



8.—AN UNIQUE DELINEATION OF OLD ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. GRAFFITI IN THE BASE OF THE CHURCH TOWER CUT DURING THE BLACK DEATH, 1350-60



9.—ST. JOHN'S GUILDHALL, HIGH STREET



10.—THE SCHOOLMASTER'S HOUSE, c. 1680

encased in stone and was admirably restored 1928-9 by Mr. William Weir of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

The whole church was rebuilt during the course of the 14th century, when the work was interrupted for perhaps a decade by the Black Death, and completed in 1381. Mr. Walter Millard has pointed out variations of design suggesting the chronological progress of the work (*Journal of R.I.B.A.*, 3rd Series, Vol. XIX, No. 1), and in the Muniment Room of Westminster Abbey is a record of payment by the Convent of £118 2s. 8d. as their two-thirds share of the cost of completing the chancel in 1368, the other being found by the parish (giving a total cost of the work of roughly £5,316 at modern values). The treatment of the upper stage of the tower suggests that it also was completed after an interruption. But the lower stage, connected with the nave by a lofty arch, must have been built before the pestilence, since its inner surface bears pathetic and remarkable *graffiti* referring to the plague. The principal inscriptions, cut on the hard clunch, are of two dates and are translated from their Latin as follows:

1350! Wretched wild distracted 1350!

The dregs of the mob alone survive to tell the tale.

Then just below:

And in the year with a tempest

Maurus this year rages mightily to all the world. 1361.

The earlier of these cries from the past was inscribed at the height of the plague, which reduced the population of England from perhaps four to some two and a half million, and precipitated an economic revolution. The second refers to the great gale of St. Maur's day, January 15, 1362, probably the severest in English annals except for that of November 26, 1703. It blew for a week from the south and west, "there hardly remained entire a house or tree in its course." Among specific records of the destruction caused was that of the bell towers at Bury, Norwich, and Austin Friars, London. No doubt Ashwell also suffered. It was followed by a very wet harvest.

Near by on the same wall is the delineation, unique in English mediæval art for its realism, of old St. Paul's Cathedral (Fig. 8)—often described as Westminster Abbey, but identified by the spire. It shows the south side and west end, with the tower of the church of St. Gregory in the churchyard. There is no clue to the authorship of these *graffiti*. The parish priest, or a refugee monk from Westminster, may have inscribed the words; but the representation of the cathedral can only be the work of a trained mason who knew St. Paul's intimately, and the contemporary method of setting out an architectural drawing. He may have been the builder of the lower part of Ashwell Tower. In this connection there has been pointed out a resemblance with the lower and slightly

earlier tower of Baldock Church, as though the same mason had conceived both, having possibly been trained on the fabric of St. Paul's. On one of the nave piers is a further inscription stating that "this second church," i.e. the rebuilding, was finished in 1381.

Except for north and south porches of East Anglian stateliness, added in the next century, the structure of the church is essentially as it was left when the rebuilding was finished. The great, light, interior was very well restored by Sir Charles Nicholson and has singularly little of post-renaissance date in the way of monuments, since there was nobody in the parish of the substance to commission funerary marble. The main benefactors of the church after its completion were apparently the guilds of St. John the Baptist and St. George, each of which had chapels. One of the most remarkable wooden adjuncts is the lych gate, probably built in the 15th century.

A little farther down Mill Street is the master's house attached to the school founded by Henry Colbron of Ashwell, who by his will dated 1655 left for this purpose £1,000, to be realised by the sale of his property, to the Merchant Taylors Company. In fact only £700 was then obtained, but the Merchant Taylors executed the bequest and still administer the Trust Fund, though the school has come under the County Council.

(To be continued)



11.—THREE HALL-HOUSES, 15th CENTURY, IN HIGH STREET



12.—THE BUTCHER'S SHOP

POINT-TO-POINT PROBLEMS

Written and Illustrated by JOHN BOARD

THAT we have enjoyed a remarkably good hunting season, at least up to the time of the great frost, we owe to the tireless labours of the hunt staffs and the unstinted help given by the farmers, who are the backbone of the sport. But it would be idle to suggest that many hunts are free of financial care. Even with reduced establishments and with everything brought down to "utility" level, as befits our present condition, the expense of keeping hounds is higher than ever.

Before the war, for every pack kept on a princely scale, there were dozens that were hard put to it to keep going. Nowadays the problem is even more acute, for in these days of savage taxation, subscriptions cannot be expected to keep pace with the cost of living, which is nearly three times higher than in 1939. No means of raising funds can be neglected, and one of the chief of these is (and has been for many years) the annual point-to-point or Hunt races. Moreover these fixtures give entertainment to the countryside, attract outsiders and afford opportunity to make some small return of hospitality to the farmers to whom we owe so much.

Conditions have changed since our fathers' time, and to-day there exist two schools of thought: those who stand for the "rigour of the game" in its extreme simplicity of the genuine "point-to-point," and to whom the idea of a prepared course is anathema, and those who maintain that racing over a made and previously reconnoitred course is the fairest test of horse and rider. For my part I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the "moderns" have reason on their side.

In the first place the selection of a sporting "natural" course is impossible without giving an unfair advantage to the man whose life has been spent in the immediate neighbourhood. Moreover, not many fences, wire apart, are jumpable except at a few given points—many at only one. Three horses, say, arrive at this point almost simultaneously. Either all three jump it together, in which case serious casualties are inevitable to horse and rider, or else they jump it in turn, and the last over finds himself the best part of a furlong behind the first.

Again, a "natural" course is more likely to cause grief than a carefully made one, and there is no sense in risking serious damage to a valuable hunter. Out hunting there is time to select your place, collect your mount and nego-

tiate the obstacle correctly and in safety. When racing this is impossible. No, on the whole let us have our "made" courses and let the best man win, even if the "eye for a country" is thereby discounted.

But, none the less, the point-to-point is a hunt steeplechase, and is designed to test hunters that have been fairly hunted throughout the season, not horses that have "barely been stripped for a trot within sight of the hounds." There is altogether too much seen of the "point-to-point" horse these days, an animal seldom hunted fairly, or at all, by its owner, a race-horse rather than a hunter. To be sure the onus is on the Master, but it is unreasonable to expect

that this man of many cares should distract his attention from the business of hunting his hounds in order to note every horse brought out for a day's hunting.

Accordingly, though all certificates are given in the best of faith, many entries are accepted for horses that can only be acknowledged by courtesy as hunters. The acceptance of such entries is unfair on everyone else and a deterrent to the farmers in particular, most of whom have an odd youngster or two that they are anxious to race and perhaps, in the event of a win, sell at a reasonable profit.

Nowadays it is the fashion to race in colours, racing saddles and other appurtenances



MANY FENCES CAN BE JUMPED AT ONLY ONE PLACE



POINT-TO-POINT RACES SHOULD BE RUN OVER TYPICAL HUNTING COUNTRY

of the race-course; the bookmakers we have always had with us, but now the totalisator, too, is present. I confess to a preference for the old conditions of "to be ridden in hunting dress," though the colours are, to be sure, helpful to the general public and give perhaps an added air of festivity to the gathering. The tendency in these days is for courses "all grass," presumably to conform more closely to Cheltenham and Sandown. But considering that point-to-points are for hunters, they should be run over typical hunting country (even if we have agreed to have "made" fences), and there are few counties of my acquaintance in which a proportion of every run of the season is not over plough. On the whole this is a matter for compromise between tradition and expediency.

Admitting that one of the prime objects is to make money, it is clearly necessary to consider the interests of the public—many of them strangers to the country. A course that is all visible to the spectators is extremely desirable and should, I think, outweigh almost all other considerations. Good parking accommodation is another important matter, for there is nothing more infuriating than parking your car in a bog from which there is only the slenderest hope of escaping without great difficulty at the end of the day. The provision of a few tractors to this end is a wise precaution, especially in a wet season, and one to which organisers would do well to pay attention.

The notion, often expressed, that racing a horse renders it intemperate does not bear



3.—"A STEEPLECHASER IS NOT EVERYONE'S RIDE OUT HUNTING"

dispassionate examination. It is a fact that a steeplechaser is not everyone's ride out hunting since, by reason of his education, he is liable to "catch hold" and is not educated to the normal behaviour of a hunter. Moreover, excitability very often originates from the memory of pain. Memory of a bad fall, undue exhaustion, or extreme punishment will remain with a horse for a lifetime. A hunter who has suffered will certainly remember it, but it is extremely unlikely that it will connect it with anything but a race-course.

Every horse enjoys a gallop at full speed and benefits from it, and why a few fast gallops

in April should render a horse intemperate in the following November and in quite different conditions I fail to understand. In fact I am quite certain that it will not, especially if the horse is taken up from grass reasonably early, given some steady hacking in the late summer and regularly taken out cub-hunting later on. The horse, though one of the Lord's greatest fools in many respects, possesses a certain amount of intelligence. Keeness and nappiness are separate qualities. Most horses know by instinct whether or not they are going out hunting. If they are hunters by profession they may—and probably will—exhibit symptoms of excitement when first taken out, but it is a pleasurable excitement that soon subsides, for they are (or should be) properly educated and schooled. But that does not betoken intemperateness. Actually I am inclined to think that it does a hunter good to run in a point-to-point or two at the end of a season, provided it is still sound and does not meet with any unpleasant experience.

One of the great dangers to point-to-point racing is the existence of a small tribe of pot-hunters who travel from meeting to meeting with animals that can only be called "hunters" by courtesy. Most executives feel that they cannot afford to refuse entries, but I am certain that if they set their faces resolutely against those whose *bona fides* are questionable, even at the expense of reduced fields, they would reap their rewards within two seasons by the increased local popularity and entries and by far greater enjoyment all round.

FLAT RACING PROSPECTS

AT the time of writing, flat racing prospects for 1947 are somewhat obscure owing to the Government's desire to curtail mid-week sporting events in the interests of national production. It seems almost certain, however, that the Derby, and perhaps the other classic races and such events as the Cambridgeshire and Cesarewitch handicaps, will be transferred to week-ends.

After the severe restrictions imposed upon racing during the war, the Jockey Club had planned a comprehensive programme for the coming season, with the dual object of maintaining the high standard of British bloodstock and of giving owners and others who had supported the industry during its lean times the opportunity to reap some reward for their patient loyalty. Thus, although it may be necessary to curtail mid-week racing in the industrial areas, it is to be hoped that such curtailments will not be too severe, since widespread cuts would lead inevitably, not only to hardship to those connected with the thoroughbred industry, but to a general slump in the value of bloodstock itself. Owners, deprived of the chance to win races, would be compelled to sell their horses, thereby causing a glut on the market.

At just about this time last year it seemed as certain as anything can be in the racing world that one of the sons of Hyperion which Mr. Freer, the official handicapper, considered to have been the best two-year-old colts of 1945 would win the Derby; while now it seems almost equally certain that the winner will emanate from the Beckhampton stable, presided over by Fred Darling, who already has seven Derby winners to his credit.

There was a surprising upset last year when Precipitation's son, Airborne, put paid to the pretensions of all the Hyperions and others, and there may be another one next June, if Fred Darling's charge, Tudor Minstrel, is beaten by a stable-companion.

This is not written on the assumption that Tudor Minstrel will not stay the distance of the course. Such an idea, widely promulgated by

some writers, is based on the fact that he is a half-brother to Neola and Neolight, neither of which could manage more than a mile in comfort, but is conveniently forgetful of the knowledge that both of these were by Nearco, a sire whose stock are usually deficient in stamina.

Tudor Minstrel, on the other hand, is by the Derby and substitute Gold Cup winner, Owen Tudor, and so may be expected to have inherited a good measure of stamina.

Bred and owned by Mr. J. A. Dewar, and the probable mount of Gordon Richards, who has yet to ride a Derby winner, Tudor Minstrel has an unbeaten record and, on ancestry, seems certain to stay a mile and a half. For all that, it is possible that his owner may find a better one for Epsom in his present, second string, Combat, which is by Big Game out of Commotion, and which, like Tudor Minstrel, is unbeaten.

Looking back over Fred Darling's remarkable record as a trainer of Derby winners, it will be seen that he has rarely, if ever, got them to hand so early or given them so many races in their juvenile days as he has these two colts, but rather has kept them back and contented himself with just one, or at most two, outings to open them out.

This typical programme of his has been carried out with His Majesty's colt, Blue Train, which was bred at, and is leased from, the National Stud and in all probability will be ridden by Carr. A grand horse in the making, this chestnut colt claims the Derby winner, Blue Peter, as his sire and is the first produce of the One Thousand Guineas, Oaks and St. Leger winner, Sun Chariot, which was by Hyperion. Not in the least likely to be ready for the "Guineas," a race that I believe holds little fascination for the Beckhampton trainer, it is probable that Blue Train will be just about right when Epsom comes along and, just as Airborne was the first grey colt to win the Derby since Mahmoud's victory in 1936, may be the first first-foal to score since the Aga Khan's home-bred colt, now the leading sire in America, earned a decisive triumph over Taj Akbar, Thankers-

ton and nineteen others, three years before the war.

The classic races for colts are of more importance and popular interest than those confined to fillies and for these reasons, and because this year it seems to me that the colts are immeasurably superior to the fillies, I shall not discuss the latter. Indeed, the only promising filly that I have seen is Lord Portal's Solpax, and I have already told her story in COUNTRY LIFE of January 24.

Of the older horses, the French-bred colt, Souverain, and our own Airborne seem to dominate the picture. The latter, a grey son of the Ascot Gold Cup winner, Precipitation, by easy victories in the Derby and St. Leger proved himself to be the best of the second-season runners in this country, but was defeated by Souverain, which had scored in the Prix Jean Prat, the Grand Prix de Paris and the Prix Royal Oak on the other side of the Channel, and by the Irish Derby winner, Bright News, in the newly established King George VI Stakes at Ascot, last October.

One or other of these is practically certain to be favourite for whichever Cup race it competes, but danger to both may be forthcoming from Sir Humphrey de Trafford's Look Ahead, Sir Richard Brooke's Peterborough and Mr. Stanhope Joel's Murren.

All three of these were backward last season, but Look Ahead gave evidence of Cup possibilities when he readily won the Ascot Gold Vase, and had been in steady work throughout the winter until the snow came; Peterborough, whose owner has recently bought a big stud in Ireland, was temporarily retired after his race in the Derby and since then has been given time to mature naturally by being hacked about round Middleham, while Murren, as a son of the French Derby and Grand Prix de Paris winner, Mieuxce, may well be better as a four-year-old than he was last season when, it will be remembered, he ran Airborne to a length and a half in the St. Leger. A genuine trio, they are worth noting for all their engagements.

ROYSTON.

A COUNTRYWOMAN'S NOTES

By EILUNED LEWIS

THE English countrywoman landing in Bombay for the first time gets an unattractive and quite false impression of Indian birds. Kites and crows greet her at every turn, although greeting hardly describes the behaviour of these ungracious creatures, even if the persistent cawing of the crows puts one a little in mind of an English rookery, while the bird's grey neck and breast recall to a Scotsman his native "hoodie." Yet a walk in any of the gardens on Malabar or Cumballa Hills, or along the Willingdon Golf Course, can produce a variety and enchantment of bird life, although the song—as song is known in England—is lacking.

When walking across the fairway one may see, almost beneath one's feet, a graceful fawn-and-black bird digging in the grass for insects with its long, curved beak, the head giving oddly the impression of a small pick-axe. Alarmed by one's approach the bird flies off and one end of the pick-axe opens into a decorative fan-shaped crest. This is the hoopoe, known all over India and sometimes seen in England.

Another charming small Indian bird is the green bee-eater, with his emerald-green plumage and two central tail-feathers stretching about two inches beyond the others. In companies of twenty and thirty these brilliant creatures swoop and circle among the branches of tall trees with a grace and symmetry that are a delight to the eye, while the air around glitters green with the movement of their wings. If one is really lucky one may find the nest of a tailor bird, that olive-green, industrious little fellow, holding his tail as cockily as does our Jenny Wren. He stitches together the leaves of his home with fibre and gossamer, and always puts a knot at the end of the thread, to prevent it coming undone.

* * *

CERTAINLY bird-watching can be one of the pleasures of life in India, and one, above all, that remains, however much the other amenities of life may be threatened. On a small piece of rocky ground at the end of a garden in the middle of Bombay, overlooked by flats, a wild

peacock and his six wives go to roost every evening. That is good enough to watch, but perhaps nothing can equal the thrill of beholding from the train window at sunrise, after a night journey, seven or eight sumptuous peacocks feeding in their glory on the fields of Rajputana, or to surprise beside a solitary *jheel* a Sarus crane, tall as a man and stately as a Lord Chief Justice, in scarlet and grey.

* * *

TRAVELLING in India remains, in some respects, very much the same as it was ten or twenty years ago. Of course, there are the network of civil air services, and air-conditioned coaches on the mail trains, but the way up-country does not always lie along these routes. On the more roundabout lines the train dawdles as of old, waiting at innumerable wayside stations for other trains to pass it, while the fine, reddish dust seeps through net and wooden shutter, and the sweeper with his primitive twig broom comes in next morning to stir it up under the bearer's eye. But where once the guard on such a train was generally English he is now almost certainly Indian.

At every station there is the same friendly, interested crowd of those who are travelling, those who are seeing off the travellers and those (far more numerous) who have simply come to look. In the chill wind of early morning they are there, shivering a little in their cotton clothes, wearing shawls, whole rugs even, on top of their heads, for it is here the Indian seems to feel the cold. They are still there in the hot bright afternoon, crouching in front of the water-carrier as he tips the water through the brass spout into their cupped hands, and at evening when sunset and smoke and dust are woven together in a shimmering haze.

That shifting, kindly, many-coloured, thoroughly unhygienic crowd is as changeless as the rocks and dust and creeping ox-carts of India. At any given moment a strip of railway platform may contain a fierce-looking hill man in a pink turban; a graceful woman in her yellow

saree and silver anklets with a child straddling her hip, on its head a purple and gold bonnet, an abbreviated shirt ending above its middle; a Mohammedan in a fur hat and turned up slippers; priests, beggars and soldiers; a man carrying two tin trunks on his head, one carrying (apparently) a meat-safe and another carrying an extra-large meat-safe, also on his head, filled with fourteen different brass pots.

* * *

CARE and love of her garden still plays a large part in the life of a *memsahib*. Comparison with gardens at home is difficult in a country where there is no rain between February and mid-July, where perennials, as we know them, do not exist and where every annual imaginable springs up and flourishes in one ecstatic season lasting less than two months.

During the last few years there has been difficulty in obtaining fresh seed from England and Australia, so that some of the stock needs replenishing, but most gardeners here keep their own seed, and I have been told of zinnias grown in four days during the monsoon. Roses, pruned in October, have their first flowering at Christmas and their second in February. They smell as sweet as English roses and are one of the glories of the Northern Indian gardens. Violets, perhaps, are here a trifle less exquisite than "the lids of Juno's eyes," but how they grow! And how the high tide of colour brims to the full during those weeks of February and early March! The lawns of *dhooop* grass are fresh and green, setting off to full advantage beds of phlox, pansies and lupins, sweet peas, snapdragon and plump purple stocks. Cannas and poinsettias add to the riot of colour, and everywhere over fence and hedge, and against the white walls of the bungalows, are splashes of bougainvillea, deep orange *Bignonia venusta* and flowering peach blossom.

One is fain to capture and hold some of this spendthrift wantoning of colour to carry home to England, where the great regiment of countrywomen wait for the spring. It would be a sign and a greeting, a symbol of recognition of their courage and their long endurance.

RETRIEVER TRAINING

By J. B. DROUGHT

ONE of the minor consequences of the war is a scarcity of trained gun-dogs. Further, a large number of professional trainers seem to have gone out of business, which is not surprising when the present-day difficulties of keeping large kennels are considered. Be that as it may, there is plenty of evidence of an increasing demand for fully trained dogs by men who have neither the leisure nor the aptitude to train them. The majority of sportsmen do not ask a great deal; they do not want specialist animals for every phase of shooting; mostly the demand is for good retrievers. And if one puts the accent on good, these seem to be even scarcer than other breeds.

* * *

At the average shoot nowadays one seldom sees a dog whose performance is even average. No doubt the decline of walking up game and the prevalence of driving whenever possible are two excellent reasons for insistence on reliability in retrievers. But we miss the initiative of the game-finding powers of a pre-war generation. We do not see so often the dog that knows better than we ourselves whether a bird is a runner or not. And thus, although he may bring out our dead as prettily as you please, he is not on his toes as was his grandsire. Yet surely it is of major importance that we should not have to urge a dog to his game, but rather that training should be directed to developing his instinctive hunting qualities, for then, even if he err in impetuosity, he will fill a bag more readily than his companion who never leaves the straight and narrow path of respectability.

So it may be that as generation succeeds generation, an increasing tendency to subordinate initiative to steadiness may be eliminating game-finding qualities in dogs to an even

greater extent than any breeding to show standards can do. For love of hunting can be stimulated, but it cannot be created and, where it is faint, systematic restraint may entirely eradicate what little desire the dog possesses. Yet a dog so trained may be styled a "perfect retriever," for nowadays that term too often means merely that the animal described possesses a soft mouth and can be entirely relied upon not to run in. What it ought to mean, surely, is a good deal more. It should mean that a dog can mark a bird at a distance, and go to it without being coaxed, the moment he is allowed; he should be able to follow a runner half a mile, if necessary, across land teeming with ground game, and not come back empty-mouthed so long as the bird keeps above ground. If he is perfect he will not even change from the wounded bird in quest of another, but this perhaps is the kind of perfection that comes more rarely, and only with age and working experience. Probably the nearest that most of us get to the faultless retriever is the dog that combines a soft mouth with reasonable steadiness and quickness of recovery, and it is largely a matter of individual opinion which of these qualities is the more important. But at least it may be urged that without the last-named attribute one loses game, whereas a too-impulsive animal can always be led.

* * *

Slowness in a dog definitely spoils the day's shooting, for the dog that runs indecisively here, there and everywhere before getting on to his line keeps a whole field of guns waiting. For this reason, to teach quickness is surely a matter of considerable importance. Speed in the retriever is best taught by running away from the puppy, but only after it has mastered

thoroughly the art of bringing right up to hand. If you try this method with a dog attempting its first retrieve, the chances are you will tend to snatch the object from him, with the result of making him hard-mouthed. But apart from speed in delivery, a high standard of smartness in the field demands good marking when the fall of the bird is seen by the dog, as well as a high head when it is not. Thus, in learning, a young dog should first be worked up-wind, because if he is constantly sent down-wind he is certain to get the habit of going about his business with nose glued to the ground, and although many people say this is correct, a dog that can, at any time, hunt with a high head will be a quicker retriever in the long run than one that cannot. Anyway, the dog that knows how to go round and get the wind will get to the "fall" of a bird far quicker than one that hunts in circles while all the time the scent is getting colder. The disadvantage of a purely line-hunting dog can be seen when a winged bird creeps into a bush and does not run at all; often such a dog will work all round for a quarter of an hour without discovering anything, and then, if you take him up and put on a pointer or setter, either will start to the lost bird in a minute.

* * *

Thus, the retriever taught to find the "fall" of the game will, in nine cases out of ten, outpoint the more plodding animal and save appreciable time in a day's shooting.

Again, dogs that will never give up hunting until ordered can be made subservient to their master's will just as easily as those with less enterprise. It is not necessary to stifle initiative if sufficient patience is exercised in training, but it can easily be stifled if the dog is taught that the be-all and end-all of his duty is never, under

any circumstances, to move from his master's heel. Most dogs have plenty of brains, and even if they are allowed reasonable latitude to use them instead of being unduly restrained, I do not think that all-round efficiency suffers. A dog will break out occasionally, but as a rule there is a very definite excuse; his action is probably due to misunderstanding of his handler, and he desists on command. But I think the reason why some dogs show a consistency of behaviour in this respect is either that they have been too much rushed in the earlier stages of their education, or that their trainers have not fully satisfied themselves about their charges' ability to resist temptation before putting them to work at a formal shoot.

It has to be remembered that the transition from attendance on his master, shooting an odd bird or so *solus*, to all the pomp and circumstance of a shooting party, where there are many guns, many dogs, and birds falling all over the place, is a tremendous strain on a young dog's nerve. Obviously, to run in or chase is the prime instinct of any sporting animal, wherefore pent-up feelings, which can no longer be restrained, find their natural expression in this manner, unless the importance of rock-steadiness in the face of any and every temptation has been thoroughly grounded beforehand.

* * *

It is no exaggeration to say that the period at which a puppy seems to have learnt his lessons is the very one at which the trainer should be most sceptical. Very often the wish is father to the thought. A dog performs his

task satisfactorily on two or three occasions and the trainer, instead of making assurance doubly sure by the most searching tests, assumes that his dog is word perfect before he has, in reality, mastered his grammar.

The danger is that a fault so easily develops into a habit, and in this instance a habit particularly difficult to eradicate. Many a retriever puppy develops the tendency to chase because of his trainer's anxiety not to curb too severely his activities in the earlier stages of his career lest the game-finding instinct should be unduly checked. Most people naturally prefer a bold dog to one without an atom of initiative, and one of the most difficult phases of early training is to hit the happy medium. Allowances must be made for youthful impetuosity. Too much restraint is as bad as too little. Moreover, no two men handle a dog alike, nor do different dogs respond to the same kind of handling. The only generalisation, perhaps, that can be made is that if disobedience goes unpunished, most of the good of a dog's former training will be undone. Wherefore the fault must be checked instantly and at the place of its commission. It is no use waiting for ten minutes or so and then punishing an animal, for by that time he will fail to connect cause and effect. Bring him back to the exact spot and head on to the direction in which he bolted, and first appeal to his better feelings by such admonition as experience has shown to be the most effective.

It must be remembered, however, that the dog's feelings may still be in a state of such exuberance that a mild expression of disappointment will not sink in. On the decisive-

ness and promptness of your tone will depend your ability to keep the dog from a similar course of action the next time a tempting situation arises. Whatever you do, don't nag at the dog—a mistake that is commonly made; and short and sharp should be the reprimand in phrasing with which the animal is fully acquainted.

If you have been able to arrest his rush before he has made a real bolt of it, and can reduce him to a sense of shame by word of mouth, the probability is that he will not disgrace himself again or, even if he does, it will be a half-hearted effort which a rather sharper admonition will nip in the bud. But if the dog is really headstrong and persists in his unlawful course, even though he may retrieve the object, you cannot afford to accept it. You may take it and throw it away at once, thereby showing him your displeasure, and then there is nothing for it but a taste of the whip. As before, punish him at the place from which he ran in, taking him thither under arrest, so to speak, and in between the strokes of punishment read him your admonition in no uncertain tone.

* * *

At the same time I suggest that the whip be regarded as the symbol of punishment rather than its instrument. Some dogs, of course, like some schoolboys, require a wholesome whipping to turn them from evil ways. But the majority do not; and the temperament of the dog must be taken into consideration before the lash is applied, for you want rather to inspire the transgressor with a sense of shame than to inflict physical hurt for its own sake.

YOUNG MEN AT RYE A Golf Commentary by BERNARD DARWIN

I AM sitting down to write in a peevish and disappointed frame of mind. It ought to have been one of the week-ends to which I most look forward in the golfing year, that on which the Society plays against Cambridge on the Saturday, and their old friends of the Royal Worlington and Newmarket Club on the Sunday. Alas! There came the final blizzard, or at least I hope it is the final one, so that the matches must be cancelled. To make the blow harder I had heard on the telephone that in the middle of the week the course was clear of snow, and had begun to picture happily to myself the row of fir-trees and the delicious perils of the fifth green. And now that picture has become one of a desolate waste of snow, which in turn brings back to me a little scene from the long frost of 1895, and my first Lent term at Cambridge. Some of us had gone over to Worlington in a hopeful spirit, and struggled round with red balls. I suppose I must have played rather fast and loose with the rules as to scraping snow away, or at least one of my opponents thought so, for I can still hear his exceeding bitter cry, as I was about to play a brassy shot to the first hole, "The beggar's tee'd it!"

* * *

The snow was too thick this time even for what Mr. George Glennie would have called "monkey's tricks." So here I am sitting gloomily at home and reflecting that the University match is at Rye on March 25 and 26, that it is my bounden duty to write a prophetic article about it, and that I am singularly ill-qualified to do so, having seen Cambridge play but once and Oxford not at all. So disgraceful a thing has never happened to me before. I had been going to watch Oxford last term only to be unavoidably prevented at the last moment, but I had hoped to see both sides more than once this term. Like Mr. Shinwell, however, I had reckoned without the snow, and so I remain in my scandalous state of ignorance. The rival captains must likewise be in a state of comparative ignorance about some of their players, since they have had no recent, or anything like recent, matches to guide them. The Cambridge captain, Cooper, has, I observe, chosen seven players, himself and four other old blues who took part in last year's victory at St. Annes, the new secretary, M. B. Scholfield, and F. M. Lindbergh, who would have played last year but for illness. His rival, Macdonald,

has chosen five players, and it really would be absurd for me to try to make bricks with so small an amount of straw of which I do not know the quality.

I have an Oxonian friend with whom I am on terms somewhat similar to those attributed to the Yorkshire and Lancashire elevens, who are supposed to say "Good Morning" and afterwards only "How's that?" We bow ceremoniously on the morning of the match and after that exchange a few frigid common-places. When I told him before Christmas that I did not think Cambridge were as yet very

PAUSE

*"A FLAGON in crystal, shining, a slender thing;
There are wild poppies graven on the bowl,
The lip is a leaf. How strange that man should bring
Such beauty out of glass."*

*I wonder too,
Watching your eloquent fingers, watching you;
And let the marvel pass.*

*Again: "Now look,
Here is the loveliest pattern of them all,"
And over your knee the silky book
Drops page by page like water,
A stream the sun touches to animate colour,
Fire, then a pool
Spread perfectly smooth and cool
In the arc of your arm;
And where my flowing thought should be,
Contentment eddies, with your voice as bound,
"Apple-green, apple-green and ivory."*

D. FREEMAN LARKIN.

good, he replied that they were at any rate better than Oxford. As far as impartiality permits I hope he is right, and with that I must leave the prospects of this match.

As I cannot look forward I must indulge in a little looking back at the University matches that have been previously played at Rye, none of them on the course as it is to-day, but as it was when it skirted the now forbidden road. There are four of them in all, in 1911, 1914, 1923 and 1929, so that the turn of this notable battlefield has certainly come round again. In the first three of those years Oxford

won, and we of the other persuasion had come to believe that some malign fate dogged our footsteps there. Then in 1929 Cambridge won by a handsome margin of four matches; the slate had been washed clean and we start afresh. A witness is sometimes allowed to look at documents in order to "refresh his memory," and I have been poring over the scores of these matches to try to help myself remember, but it is only rather insignificant bits and pieces that come back.

* * *

Foursomes were only introduced after the first war, and so the first two of the four matches consisted simply of thirty-six hole singles. In 1911, when Oxford won by five matches to three, by far the most illustrious player on either side, judged by after events, was E. W. E. Holderness of Corpus, who played third for Oxford and won his match by 3 and 2; but that I do not remember very clearly, nor even John Ireland's win at the last hole in the top match by a single hole against J. F. Myles. In fact everything else has been obliterated by the historic shot played at the home hole by Oxford's last man, H. R. Wakefield. Everything hinged on that last match, which was all square with one to play. Oxford were one up on the whole reckoning, so that Marzetti must win that hole to save his side. We, his supporters, thought he would do so, when with fiendish glee we saw Wakefield cut his second over the green, so that his ball lay in nasty country at the foot of a steep, bumpy, sandy hillside. Marzetti's second was neither good nor bad, he was perfectly safe, near the green: he might get a four or he might get a five, and a five, so we thought in our folly, might well be good enough. And then Wakefield played his shot, and exactly how he did it I did not know, for he kept his own counsel. The ball climbed up the hill and finished very nearly dead. All was over, for he got his four and won the hole and the match, and magnanimity demands the admission that it was a great shot.

The year 1914 saw some fine golf by W. F. C. McClure for Oxford and R. P. Humphries, who annihilated Gordon Barry, for Cambridge, but again it is a player farther down the list who has made the more lasting impression on my memory. He is now the Rt. Hon. Oliver Lyttelton, and incidentally, among his minor distinctions, he is President of the Rye Golf Club. Then he was O. Lyttelton of

Trinity who played last for Cambridge. He had been, I think, three down at lunch, but cheerful news came back from the direction of the Coastguards' houses that he was getting the holes back, and sure enough when he holed out at the ninth he was one up. If he could win his side could probably win too. At this most crucial moment his mother came down the hill from the club to encourage him; he topped his tee shot hard into the sandy road and he did not win; neither did Cambridge. It is unfair perhaps to judge by a single instance, but I have had a distrust of parents ever since.

Now for 1923, when Oxford won the four-somes by one and the singles by two. The two now best known names are on the Cambridge

side, Eustace Storey and Dale Bourn. Dale played in the relatively humble position of eighth and won his match. Storey, who led the side, lost by 4 and 3 to Athole Murray, and Murray played very good golf indeed; his win, though unexpected, was entirely deserved. I have visions of a rather tragical comedy in the second single in which Goadby, for Cambridge, going to the 16th, and having the hole and almost the match in his pocket, made a transcendent hook on to the little railway line with catastrophic results. I also seem to see some colossal hooks and slices too by R. H. Bettington, who was then a very fine cricketer and football player, but by no means such a good golfer as he became afterwards.

Finally there is 1929, which being more

modern history ought to be fresher in my mind, but in fact is not, perhaps because there was no such agony for me to endure. There played in the last match that year E. Martin Smith, and two years later he was amateur champion. There was a great top match between Hingworth and Bradshaw with, unless I am grown too dim, a particularly fine second by Hingworth to the home hole; but the shot to that hole which I seem to remember best was played by an Oxford man who bombarded the club house. It was only lately that he told me that he had forgiven me for my comment on it. However he won his match and so can afford to be lenient. Let me assure him that my deportment this year will be scrupulously correct.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE BLIZZARD IN SOUTH DEVON

SIR,—I venture to think that readers in other parts of the country may be interested to hear how we in South Devon fared during the recent blizzard. In my wildest dreams I have never imagined anything like it, and am pretty confident that very few people have seen anything similar in England heretofore.

On the last Tuesday and Wednesday of the blizzard South Devon experienced a very heavy rainfall, so heavy, indeed, that in certain parts serious floods resulted. We also had heavy rain, but as we are so high up it was freezing when it fell. However, it was a perfectly calm day; there wasn't enough breeze to stir the slightest twig. The result was devastation and chaos.

The roads rapidly became impassable; the walls and roofs of houses were sheets of ice, and telephone wires were festooned with it. Just outside my window the wires that cross my drive had icicles hanging from them on an average at least every inch.

But it was upon the trees and shrubs, and every form of vegetable life that the most amazing effects were seen. As there wasn't a breath of wind when the rain fell, each drop froze at once, and the next drop froze on the top of it, and so it went on with each branch and bough, and every tiny twig was thickly encased in ice. One twig drawn at random was broken off and weighed. In its ice casing it weighed 11 oz.; stripped of its casing it was only ½ oz. The load, therefore, that each tree and shrub had to bear must have been enormous.

About two o'clock on the Wednesday morning I awoke with a start upon hearing a loud report; others followed in rapid succession. All night long, and far into the next day, these reports went on, some louder and some not so fierce; at intervals of sometimes only two or three minutes, but hardly ever more than a quarter of an hour. It was great branches and limbs being torn from the trees, and it sounded like a severe bombardment.

The devastation has been tremendous. In the glebe in front of my house are some very fine trees; every one of them now, except a noble ash, has a circle of great boughs lying on the ground around its trunk. In the woods behind the house hardly a tree has escaped; most of our flowering shrubs are flat, and the rhododendrons are in a sorry state. For the moment the place looks as if it had been bombed.

And yet, in spite of it all, we have been treated to a scene of superlative beauty. On the Thursday it was a perfect cloudless morning, and the sun rose ruby red over Blackdown. When its glow first struck the tops of the big trees, and later reached the lower branches and the hedges, they looked as if they were all ablaze with rubies. Then, as the sun gained in power and lost its colour, the likeness changed to glittering, sparkling diamonds. But the most wonderful sight was when the sun got behind

what was left of the giant beech tree, and the light shone through its branches; they just danced with a dazzling light that was almost blinding. Trees, hedges, bushes, wire netting and even the rough, coarse grass were all supremely beautiful.

But the most wonderful experience of all was when I got into my car to go to our shopping town a dozen miles away. The main road for half

no use for firewood. I have a different tale to tell. The big dead branches of an old acacia in my garden are being taken off and sawn up, and they make the best fires I have ever had, far better than beech, chestnut, cherry, or birch. They are very hard, but make a hot and lasting fire, and are easy to get going.

Cobbett swore by acacia, or "locust," as he called it, as the timber

it was not completely snow-covered, and for more than an hour the bird remained, finding what food it could on a clear patch of grass.

The sight of wild geese in flight is a rare event here in the middle of England, and I have never before seen or heard of anyone seeing geese of any species feeding in a Vale of Aylesbury meadow.

This one was, I suppose, a straggler from a flock of pinkfeet driven from their usual winter feeding grounds on the east coast by the severe weather and depth of snow. ELLIS COLES, *The Glebe Farm, Waddesdon, near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.* So far as we are aware there is no previous record of a pink-footed goose being seen in Buckinghamshire. The bird observed by our correspondent may well have been a straggler from a flock driven inland by the hard weather.—ED.]

MILTON AND THE BANYAN TREE

SIR,—Most people have heard of the banyan tree of India, which drops roots from its branches to take root and form subsidiary trunks. I wonder how many know that Milton aptly described it in *Paradise Lost*, thus:—
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground

The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillared shade
High overarched, and echoing walks between.

The specimen shown here formed an imposing archway to the entrance to the Officers' Mess of R.A.F. Station, Tanjore, Madras, housed in the former residence of a judge. The bullock-drawn vehicle in the foreground, looking rather like a dog-kennel on wheels, is the local equivalent of a taxi. DOUGLAS DICKINS, 19, Lambholt Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

CONTROL OF ROAD TRANSPORT

SIR,—With reference to recent correspondence in *COUNTRY LIFE* about limitations on the size of teams of horses two hundred and more years ago, the law prohibiting the use of more than six horses is 9 Anne, c. 23 (1710) and the reason for it (and numbers of similar Acts) was the

The expansion of trade in Tudor times, and the growth of (especially) London, led to ever-increasing traffic on the roads, especially in the form of heavy wagons, which seem to have originated at the time of Queen Elizabeth. There was no adequate legal system for maintenance of the roads, and Parliament passed an enormous number of enactments, the object of which was to restrict the loads that might be put upon the road.

The limit to the number of horses (which was varied in different Acts) was only one. Width of tyre, length of axle, use of shafts or pole, animals drawing in single or double line, kinds of nail to be used for nailing on tyres, variations as between summer and winter, made a complex mass of



A BULLOCK-DRAWN TAXI IN THE SHADE OF A BANYAN TREE IN MADRAS

See letter: Milton and the Banyan Tree.

a mile or so is along a Devon lane; the hedges on either side caught the full rays of the sun, and were almost blinding in their radiance; the stone walls, out of which the hedges grow, were dropping wells of ice; and everything shone like burnished silver. But when I reached the well-known woods, a mile or so along the road, I came upon the climax of all this amazing scene. The hedges were there just the same: behind them a plantation of young trees, most of them silver birches, and ash saplings, and in the background tall oaks and beeches; and each tried to outdo the other in splendour. I simply had to stop the car every 100 yards and look.

But, supremely beautiful as it was, all the time there was an oppressive feeling of the damage that had been done—telephone poles lying at the side of the road, snapped off five feet above the ground, with the wire lying in a tangled mass, twisted limbs of trees lying in every direction, and animals and birds suffering horrors. Ice and snow can be more lovely than anything else in Nature, but they can be hard and cruel, too.—T. H. DIXON (Rev.), *The Rectory, Manaton, South Devon.*

LOGS TO BURN

SIR,—Much has been written about logs for burning during this hard and cruel winter, and by common consent the acacia has been condemned as of

of the future, oblivious of the fact that you can never get a straight bit of wood, and that its hardness makes it liable to "ring-shakes" (circular transverse cracks) and "heart-shakes" (cracks radiating from the heart), so that it is useless as timber. However, I am glad to be able to restore its character as fuel.—ARTHUR MACDONALD, *Tring, Hertfordshire.*

THE WEARING OF YARKS

SIR,—With reference to recent correspondence about the farm workers wearing their trousers tied beneath the knees with pieces of string, this practice as I remember it was by no means limited to agricultural districts of England. Many men in the industrial districts of the North wore these yarks, some using pieces of string and others thin leather straps, as my father did.

The practice was fairly common among men who worked outdoors until at least the outbreak of the 1914 war, but during and after the war many men used puttees instead of string or straps.—E. G. BARLOW, 9, St. James's Road, Harpenden, Hertfordshire.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

SIR,—On the morning of February 13 I was surprised to see a pink-footed goose land in one of the fields here. Although the ground was frozen hard,

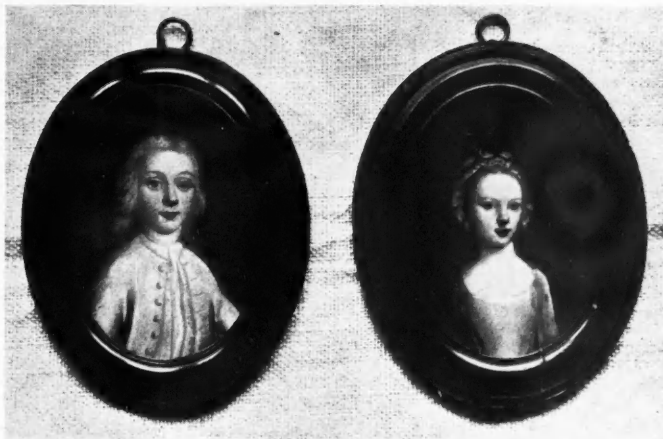
regulations. The carter's lot was anything but "pleasant and carefree."

In 9 Annæ. c. 23 and other Acts, it is provided that half the fine for infringements shall go "to him that shall discover and prosecute for any of the said offences." (It must be remembered that there were then no police to enforce the law.) Hence the zeal of the inhabitants of Chippenham. From this provision grew a flourishing "racket," for gangs grew up who offered immunity from prosecution on consideration of a quarterly payment, in default of which the wagoners would be prosecuted whether they kept the law or not. This meant ruin to a man whose business consisted in continual travel. The incident quoted by Major Jarvis may very well have been an instance of gang warfare.—R. H. LANE (Rev.), *Hollowdene, Marlborough, Wiltshire.*

Several other readers have drawn attention to instances of the complex legislation enacted to control road transport from Stuart times.—ED.]

GRAMPUSES' SUICIDE PACT

SIR,—The enclosed photograph is, I think, unique. It represents part of a school of about one hundred female grampuses, which appeared on the beach at Mar del Plata, Argentina, last October, mostly in a dying condition. In spite of several attempts to turn them out to sea they persisted in returning to the beach. For some



CHILD MINIATURES BY JAMES SMART, AN 18th-CENTURY YORKSHIRE MINIATURIST

See letter: Pioneer in Child Miniatures

PIONEER IN CHILD MINIATURES

SIR,—A friend of mine possesses a couple of charming miniatures by James Smart, who was born in the Ripon district of Yorkshire in 1701 and died in 1739. I enclose a photograph of them, as Smart is claimed to be the earliest English miniaturist to specialise in child studies alone, and these examples (circa 1733-38) are representative of his work.

Enclosed in walnut frames 3¼ ins. high, the portraits are those of a boy and a girl, whose identity, however, local investigations have so far failed to reveal. A note on the back of one frame states: "Belonging to the ancestors of Mary I. Hale."

Smart's father was a local landowner, it seems, and his gifted son spent a lot of time painting the children of neighbouring gentry. In the diary of a certain Yorkshire family, he was described as "of genteel appearance." The entry goes on to state that the family were "very satisfied" with his painting of their child.

I understand that Miss Fitzherbert is at present writing a book on James Smart and his work, which has hitherto received little notice.—G. B. WOOD, *Leeds.*

EARLY GEORGIAN DATE-STONE

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a quaint stone over the doorway of a cottage in a narrow street in the hill-top village of Heptonstall, near Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire. As will be seen, the date is 1736, and the initial of the surname F.

There are quite a number of the Fielden family buried in the near-by churchyard, and one wonders whether

the initials refer to that family; and also whether there is any connection with John Fielden, M.P., of Todmorden (1784-1849), as the latter place is only four miles from Heptonstall, and it is known that the Fieldens had relatives in Heptonstall.—ARNOLD JOWETT, 310, Hopwood Lane, Halifax, Yorkshire.

A POSSESSIVE MONKEY

SIR,—Jacko, the monkey shown in the accompanying photograph, was found as a youngster by one of the gun teams of a Light A.A. Troop of the 53rd L.A.A. Regt., while the regiment was fighting in North Africa. He was adopted by the cook, and although we were always rather doubtful of his possible effect on the food served by the cookhouse, no ill-effects ever became apparent. Perhaps this was because he had to undergo regular bath nights!

In due course the regiment took part in the Sicily and later the Italy fighting. By this time Jacko was a thoroughly battle-hardened veteran. But perhaps he was lonely for the company of someone more his own size, and one day he returned from an exercise bringing in his arms a small rabbit, which was christened Peter.

These two became tremendously friendly. Jacko would spend all day playing with Peter, running round with him, singing with him (or so it seemed), and giving him boxing lessons.

As Peter grew, so Jacko became more and more zealous of his safety and jealous of his companionship. Anyone attempting to take Peter to pet him risked a scratching from Jacko. He would leap about and gesticulate and swear horribly in

monkey chatter to show his disapproval.

This association lasted throughout the Italian campaign. Peter became fully grown, but Jacko was still big enough to be able to enfold him in his arms and protect him against all comers, to their mutual enjoyment.

Jacko did not greatly object to gunfire, but when shells were around he would hold on to his Peter so that no harm should come to him. Neither ever made the slightest effort to escape.—IAN H. F. FINDLAY, 66, Manor Way, Beckenham, Kent.

THE LESSER WHITEBEAM

SIR,—May I be allowed to comment on your Editorial Note *Spare that Tree* (February 7), which has just been brought to my notice?

Lesser whitebeam (*Pyrus minima* Ley = *Sorbus minima* Hedl.) was described by its discoverer, Augustine Ley, as a distinct species and was also recognised as such by Hedlund, the monographer of the genus *Sorbus*. It is not Swedish whitebeam (*Pyrus intermedia*), although some writers have chosen (as they have a perfect right to do) to regard it as a variety of that species; Swedish whitebeam is



JACKO, THE MONKEY ADOPTED BY AN ARMY UNIT IN NORTH AFRICA DURING THE WAR, KEEPS A TIGHT HOLD ON PETER, THE RABBIT HE BEFRIENDED

See letter: A Possessive Monkey

not a native British plant and lesser whitebeam is.

Pyrus minima is confined as a native plant to the limestone cliffs of Llangattock; it has not so far been recorded from any other locality in Britain or elsewhere. Its natural habit is not, as you imply, prostrate. All the examples I have seen grow out from the cliff and assume the sort of shape that any shrubby plant is likely to take in such a situation. Several other species of tree or shrub, including two species of *Pyrus* related to *P. minima*, grow on the same cliffs; they all display their essential botanical characters as well there as in a botanic garden; they do not in the least appear to have been growing on a "starvation diet," and there is no reason to suppose that *Pyrus minima* is exceptional in that respect. No evidence has in fact been brought forward to show that lesser whitebeam is anything other than the distinct taxonomic entity that Ley thought it to be.

The limestone cliffs of Llangattock are therefore the unique habitat of one particular kind of British plant, but this alone perhaps would not entitle the area to be spared from desecration. What is far more important is that the whole of the vegetation of these cliffs (a plant community that has been very little studied in Britain and never ade-



AQUAINT DATE-STONE ABOVE COTTAGE AT HEPTONSTALL, YORKSHIRE

See letter: Early Georgian Date-stone

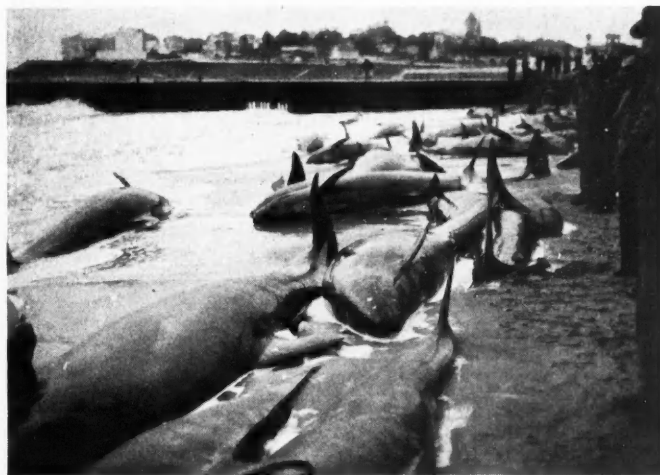
days the mystery was unexplained, and an old fisherman, who was born here, told me that he had never seen or heard of such a sight before. Several explanations, even atomic bomb poisoning, were put forward.

Eventually the Government sent down experts from Buenos Aires, who made autopsies and discovered that the creatures were females (several young were, in fact, born on the sands), that they were perfectly healthy, but that the stomach and intestines were empty; in fact, they were dying of starvation.

An old volume solved the mystery, as it stated that "in the event of a male orca being injured and likely to die, he makes for the nearest coast followed by his many wives, who, after he is dead, commit suicide by starvation, flinging themselves on the beach to die."

These orcas varied in size from six to ten feet long, were of a dull elephant-grey colour, and had a small fin on either side of the head and a fin-like tail with a dash of bright red on it. They had small eyes, a large shark-like mouth and long sharp teeth.

I wonder if any of your readers has ever witnessed a similar occurrence, which I understand is remarkable, inasmuch as these animals generally make for an isolated part of the coast for this suicide pact. There had been several violent storms with heavy seas before their arrival.—LILIAN MARSH-SIMPSON (Miss), *Mar del Plata, Argentine Republic.*



PART OF A SCHOOL OF FEMALE GRAMPUSES ON THE BEACH AT MAR DEL PLATA, ARGENTINA

See letter: Grampuses' Suicide Pact

quately described) should remain freely accessible to naturalists now and for all time; for them it would and should be one of the great attractions of the proposed Breconshire National Park to which you referred on the same page.—H. A. HYDE, M.A., F.L.S., Keeper of the Department of Botany, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

A DISTINCT SPECIES

SIR,—It is unfortunate that in the same issue that contains a Leading Article in defence of National Parks (February 7), there should also appear a Note decrying the action of the Member for Brecon and Radnor and the War Minister in taking steps to preserve

being numbered. The game is played in the same way as spillikins, except that the thumb and the finger are generally used instead of the little wooden or bone hooks in spillikins. This use of the thumb and the finger explains the large heads of straws in comparison with those of spillikins.

The game is won by the player whose straws total the highest number of points; hence the numbers on your correspondent's set.—A. G. WADE (Major), Ash Cottage, Bentley, Hampshire.

BUS SHELTERS IN THE COUNTRY

SIR,—With reference to recent correspondence about village bus shelters, you may care to see the enclosed photograph of one of a pair given by Lord Ridley to a Northumberland village. They stand facing each other across the Great North Road at Stanington, and were designed by Mr. Laurence Whistler and made by Lord Ridley's estate workmen. R MCMXXXVII R appears on the frieze about the pilasters.—A. B., London, W.2.

WAXWINGS IN LONDON

SIR,—Apropos of the recent correspondence about waxwings, I was surprised to see five of these birds in a North London suburb on March 9.

They were taking berries from berberis and mountain ash in front gardens and appeared interested in clusters of seeds hanging from a laburnum.—FRANK BAKER, London, N.11.

IN SUFFOLK

SIR,—Photographs of waxwings taken in this country appear to be rare, so you may like to publish the enclosed picture of part of a flock of some 40 that visited this district for a period of 10 days or so at the end of January.

The birds were extremely tame in the presence of human beings, and I obtained the photograph by standing below the cotoneaster that formed their favourite feeding-place and awaiting their return from the tops of

some neighbouring elms, to which they had flown when disturbed by the rumble of a passing lorry. It was lovely to see them dropping like falling leaves, especially in the rare intervals of sunshine, when the scarlet berries and blue sky and fluttering birds (pale grey-brown with black faces, white wing-bars and yellow tips to their tail feathers) made a charming picture.—D. G. GARNETT, Fairfield House, Leiston, Suffolk.

BEAUTY OF SATINWOOD

SIR,—I am sending you a photograph of the commode in the Lady Lever Art Gallery referred to by Miss M. Jourdain in her article, *The Age of Satinwood Furniture*, in a recent issue of COUNTRY LIFE, in the hope that the beauty of this fine piece of furniture may be fully appreciated.

The commode is in the form of a chest, opening at the ends with side doors, each enclosing four mahogany drawers. The designs employed in the veneering are executed in the best manner, with satinwood as the background throughout. The front is decorated by a medallion of a lion couchant on a green ground, from which are suspended swags of drapery and oak branches. Small ramshorn-headed altars, in brass, head the pilasters, and the feet and base are also moulded in the same metal. The sides centre in finely executed female masks in brass surrounded in a garland



ONE OF A PAIR OF BUS SHELTERS IN THE VILLAGE OF STANNINGTON, NORTHUMBERLAND

See letter: Bus Shelters in the Country

that interesting tree *Sorbus* (or *Pyrus*) *minima*.

It is, as you state, incorrect to describe this tree as the smallest in the world or to suggest that there is only one tree on Mynydd Llangatwg, but it is equally incorrect to suggest that the special characters are brought about by starvation or that the tree is of prostrate habit in Nature. While the "correct" botanical status of any plant must be a matter of opinion, there are probably few botanists to-day who would regard the tree as anything but a distinct species. The name *minima* was probably derived rather from the general slenderness and the small size of the leaves and fruit than from the habit of the tree (which reaches a height of 6 ft. or so in Nature) and these characters as well as others are retained under cultivation.

The interest of the tree is that it is one of the few species of plant restricted to the British Isles, being in Nature confined to about two miles of limestone cliff (Mynydd Llangatwg) and one of the most distinct of these. *Sorbus intermedia* is a Scandinavian and North German tree and does not occur as a native tree in this country at all.

Botanists and all those who are interested in our flora must be extremely gratified that steps have been taken to preserve this tree on its native cliffs. If it were to be exterminated there, its preservation in Kew Gardens or elsewhere would be little compensation.—EDMUND F. WARBURG (Dr.), Lecturer in Botany, Bedford College for Women, University of London, Regent's Park, N.W.1.

[The scientific staff at Kew have now ruled that *Pyrus* (*Sorbus*) *minima* is sufficiently distinct from *P. intermedia* and from other species to entitle it to specific rank. Not all botanists will agree. Mr. W. J. Bean, though recording it as having smaller leaves and flowers, regarded it as a form of *intermedia*.—Ed.]

JACK STRAWS AND SPILLIKINS

SIR,—In COUNTRY LIFE of January 31 a correspondent asks for what game the set of men illustrated in her photograph were used. They are jack straws for playing a rough version of the game of spillikins.

A set of jack straws consists of some 40 to 50, or more, pieces each



WAXWINGS STRIPPING A COTONEASTER OF ITS BERRIES BESIDE THE MAIN STREET OF A SUFFOLK TOWN

See letter: In Suffolk

of oak leaves and acorns. The top is exquisitely designed with inlays of geometrical circles, palm branches tied with a green ribbon and an interlacement of husking, all being enclosed in a double border of tulipwood.

The representation of satinwood furniture in the Lady Lever Collection is among the finest known, occupying six complete rooms in addition to the numerous examples that are displayed with period furniture dating from Elizabethan times in other parts of the Lady Lever Art Gallery.

The Lady Lever Art Gallery is situated in the heart of Port Sunlight, Cheshire, on the G.W. and L.M.S. joint line from Chester to Birkenhead, the nearest station being Bebington and New Ferry, which is five minutes' walk away. It is open each weekday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sundays 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. From April to September the closing hour is 6 p.m.—SYDNEY DAVISON, Curator, The Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, Cheshire.

AT APSLEY FARM

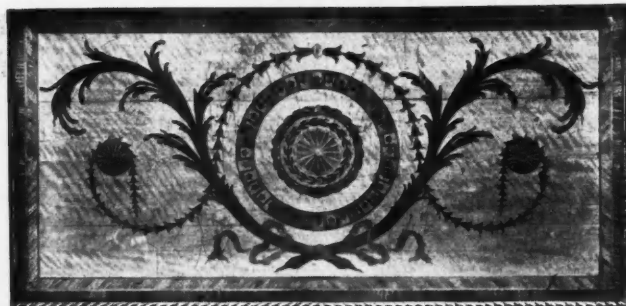
SIR,—In my description of Apsley Farm House (November 15, 1946) I attributed the baillif's house, built of Canadian cedar, to Mr. A. R. Hasbany Bateman, F.S.I. I now understand that the detailed design was due to Mr. R. T. Perry, F.R.I.B.A., an architect with experience of this type of construction to whom Mr. Bateman specified the general character and lay-out. The names of both these gentlemen should therefore have been associated with this excellent little building.—CHRISTOPHER HUSSE, 13, Cadogan Square, S.W.1.

DOES BRITAIN STILL MAKE IT?

SIR,—With reference to the statement in a recent letter, that one looks in vain for a salt bucket among our modern pottery, I have in my possession two bought in 1941 at the Wetheriggs potteries near Penrith.

Their shape is much the same as that of the Scottish salt bucket, but the opening is slightly smaller and there is a handle to hang them up by behind the knob. The glaze is dark brown and they are elaborately decorated with cream pipe-slip clay; the word salt and the date form part of these decorations.

The potteries are still working but I am not sure if they are producing salt buckets at the present time.—JOAN A. INGLBY, Coleshouse, Ashgill, Leyburn, Yorkshire.



A FINE SATINWOOD COMMODORE IN THE LADY LEVER ART GALLERY AT PORT SUNLIGHT, CHESHIRE. (Above) A DETAIL OF THE TOP

See letter: Beauty of Satinwood

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NEW BOOKS

FOR NINE MONTHS ON AN ICE-FLOE

Reviews by HOWARD SPRING

A CERTAIN amount was heard in 1937 and 1938 of the four Russians who drifted on an ice-flow from the North Pole, down the eastern coast of Greenland, and were taken off the floe when they were roughly in the same latitude as the northern tip of Sweden. They had lived and made constant scientific observations on the floe for 274 days and had drifted 1,324 miles. Now at last the detailed account of the adventure, written by the leader of the expedition, Ivan Papanin, is published by Hutchinson under the title *Life on an Icefloe* (18s.). Like many men of action, Papanin is no writer. The manner of the book is dull and full of repetition, but the matter is heroic, thrilling to any mind that can fill in the author's bleak outline.

Telling the story roughly, it was

be a difficulty, and, when they were found, there would be exhausting work in clearing the snow. As the journey proceeded, another pressing danger was the tendency of the floe to break up. This, of course, was by the dumps were widely scattered. If all had been together, and that part of the floe had broken off and drifted away, the men would have been doomed. As it was, towards the end when the inevitable break-up came, a lot of stuff drifted away, but by rapid work in rubber boats they were able to save much. Finally a figure appeared under the very floor of their living-tent, and they had to take refuge in a flimsy tent of silk. The floe, when they set out, was a huge island with several airfields of ice on it. They could walk for hours in any direction. What, finally, the rescuing ice-breaker

LIFE ON AN ICEFLOE. By Ivan Papanin
(Hutchinson 18s.)

CHARLES KINGSLEY AND HIS IDEAS. By Guy Kendall
(Hutchinson 21s.)

THE ANGELIC AVENGERS. By Pierre Andrézel
(Putnam 10s. 6d.)

this. The four men were landed at the Pole from an aeroplane during the Arctic summer. Papanin's job was the direction of the whole enterprise. His companions were Shirshov, a marine biologist, who spent most of his time letting instruments down through a hole in the ice and recording his findings; Fedorov, who was in charge of magnetic observations; and Krenkel, the wireless operator. There was also a dog, named Merry. Krenkel's wireless station was the nerve-centre of the operations. A windmill was set up, and this charged the accumulators. Thus the adventurers were in constant touch with the outside world. They could listen to concerts, pick up the news, hear their wives speaking to them at sessions specially arranged for the purpose, and learn that all four had been elected to the Russian Parliament. They could transmit too. Even if they had all perished, much of what they achieved would have been safe, for the results of the scientific work were sent off regularly. Also, they were able to send articles to the Russian Press.

BITTER BLIZZARDS

Their living-tent was small but well-thought-out. Two layers of eider-down were put between two layers of tarpaulin, stretched over a framework of duralumin. There were bunks one above another, as in a ship. The floor was of inflated rubber, with three-ply wood on top of that, and skins on top of the three-ply. It sounds cosy, but in the Arctic summer the floor was often awash, and in winter blizzards it was bitter. The men became expert builders with snow-bricks, and made a kitchen and other rooms in that way.

Concentrated food was plentiful, but the dumps in which it (and much else) was stored were a constant anxiety. When blizzards blew up, the whole geography of the floe would alter. Even to find the dumps could

picked them up from was a piece of ice measuring thirty metres by ten, cracked in several places.

Papanin, as I say, records it all unemotionally. He is a master of under-statement: "On the whole, it is none too pleasant living on an ice-floe in the Polar night." Only rarely do we get anything as vivid as this: "In places we could not even walk, but had to crawl. We could see nothing ahead of us; driving wind and snow burned our faces."

The amount of time put in on hard work was prodigious. Sometimes they would be at it for days on end without sleep, yet one of the four never turned into his bunk without taking an hour's lesson in English, and Papanin made time to keep up the political morale. "Afterwards I gave the lads a talk on the Stalin constitution. We spent a long time discussing our Motherland, our victories, and the struggle being waged against the enemies of the people." Read "Sp" in for "the enemies of the people," and you begin to feel something Elizabethan about the whole adventure. One smiles at Papanin's constant naïve adulation of Stalin until one recalls "Gloriana," the "Virgin B" and all the rest of it; and one sees that men really do put more into their endeavours when the spirit of their time is incarnate in some legendary human being.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Mr. Guy Kendall's *Charles Kingsley and His Ideas* (Hutchinson, 21s.) is an account of what the author calls "a mid-Victorian parson and devoted novelist." The interest of the book to me was in the light it threw on these two sides of Kingsley's make-up, parson and novelist, moralist and artist. Like many a writer before and since, he never succeeded in reconciling these two parts of his equipment. Mr. Kendall says he

"detested the idea of a 'mere artist,' like Vavasour in *Two Years Ago*, and therefore, thrust and forced a moral into each of his novels, never daring to let it out of sight. He could not trust each of the two values, the good and the beautiful, to be its own justification," nor could he reach Keats's conclusion that these are not two values but an indissoluble one. A poet is always more likely than a novelist to make this synthesis, for the simple reason that a poet gets behind human conduct to the springs of human life, while the novelist, who must use human conduct for his raw material, is sharply aware of its contradictions, its sinkers as well as its floats. This, of course, was the everlasting struggle that bedevilled Tolstoy.

ACUTE DILEMMA

This book can be sincerely recommended as a careful consideration of a man caught in this dilemma at a moment of history when the dilemma was more than usually acute, because Darwin's work tended to undermine the faith of the thoughtless and to throw men upon a merely material explanation of all phenomena. In this controversy, Kingsley was more enlightened than many of his contemporaries. Indeed, he uttered a memorable phrase which, if he had clung to it in all its implications, would have solved his own personal problem once for all. To someone who "had objected that the explanation of the development of the mollusca given by Darwin could not be orthodox," he answered: "My friend, God's orthodoxy is truth; if Darwin speaks the truth he is orthodox."

Mr. Kendall thinks that of all Kingsley's books *The Water Babies* and *The Heroes* are the two most likely to survive. These books were written by him especially for his own children, and thus I find another piece of evidence supporting my view that all the great books for children were written for a particular child or group of children. But, for myself, I would give *Westward Ho!* some survival value, too. It is said to be vitiated by its author's animus against Roman Catholicism. I can say only that when I read it as a boy none of that was a hindrance to me. It did not impinge upon my mind one way or another; and I imagine that for a long time to come boys will be fascinated by the swing of the narrative, and the heroic stature of the characters, and the stirring setting of the whole thing, both in time and place.

A QUEER NOVEL

Pierre Andrézel's *The Angelic Avengers* (Putnam, 10s. 6d.) is one of the queerest novels I have come upon for a long time. The author, the publishers tell us, "is described as" a Frenchman born in Rouen and educated at Oxford. This novel was published in Copenhagen in 1944, and "Pierre Andrézel has not been heard of since the appearance of his novel in Denmark."

If every Drury Lane melodrama you ever saw was rolled into one, it would work up into some such book as this. The setting is England and France a hundred years ago. The characters are a poor governess who narrowly escapes a seducer, a wealthy pampered girl whose father loses his fortune overnight, a colossal negress given to voodoo practices, an English clergyman engaged in the white slave traffic, the romantic inhabitants of a French château, and so forth. The action moves between scenes of splendour and poverty, riotous enjoy-

ment and deadly peril, both to life and to that which the old novelists told us was "dearer than life."

The strange thing is that the whole book has an appeal that cannot be gainsaid. Laugh as you must here and there not with but at the characters, the author holds you and compels you to read on to the end. No translator's name is given, so presumably this is the author's version. The English is sedate and quiet, so that we have an odd feeling of a prim old maid retelling in her own fashion a tale that would have delighted the heart of George R. Sims.

THE NEW MOSCOW

A BOOK by representative Moscow citizens, giving some account of that side of modern city life which engages their own energies and attention, is more likely to get a sympathetic public in a country also in the throes of urban reconstruction than any amount of ideological polemics. *Moscow. Sketches on the Russian Capital* (Hutchinson, 15s.) has some odd features in addition to the wording of its title, but it is essentially readable and the chapters of which it consists are contributed by men and women of undoubted claim to describe both the city in which they live and work and the revolution which has taken place within it in their time. Mr. Bak-hushria, as historian, puts the ancient capital in its racial and national background, and is followed by Mr. Chevinsher, the Chief City Architect, by Mr. Timinagov, who writes of the University and its work, by a Factory Director, by the People's Artist of the U.S.S.R., by a Moscow girl, by a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet and others.

Among these contributions one of the most interesting is that of Mr. Chevinsher, whose account of the planning and rebuilding of modern Moscow makes fascinating reading. It would, of course, be much more instructive had it been accompanied by plans and photographs of buildings, but unfortunately the book has no illustrations. The City Architect himself confesses, as many others in similar positions might if they were equally candid, that he himself has gradually lost sight of the wood in the trees. For many years past he has been engaged on the reconstruction of the city and has become "so accustomed to seeing the Moscow streets in a state of continuous renewal," that he has "somehow lost all sense of the scale of the changes that have taken place." "Of course," he continues, "I know exactly how many houses have been built and how many main thoroughfares have been constructed during this period, but I needed an occasion [the compilation of this book] which would force me to comprehend, not only intellectually but emotionally, the immense amount of work that has been done." E. B.

THE R.H.S. YEAR BOOKS

THE Year Books published by the Royal Horticultural Society (6s. and 7s. 6d.) have always been warmly welcomed by keen gardeners. After a lapse of six years they are doubly welcome this season. *The Lily* and *The Daffodil Year Books* are, of course, old favourites, though the latter has one innovation in that Tulip notes are now included. *The Rhododendron Year Book* is a newcomer, the first to be published since the Rhododendron Association amalgamated with interested Fellows of the Society to form the Rhododendron Group. All three are models for other year books to follow. The information they offer is not only authoritative; it is unique in that most of the articles are from recognised leaders in their respective fields. Production, though necessarily austere, is commendably good, and the illustrations in all three are admirable. D. T. MACF.

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FARMING NOTES

FARMERS' TALK

A TRAIN journey in company with three other farmers, taken because road travelling was too precarious, gave us 1½ hours to talk over the turn which agricultural policy has taken with the Minister's statement on produce prices for the coming year. I found that each of us had expected more drastic measures to secure increased production on the livestock side, and were more disturbed than relieved that Mr. Tom Williams is proving such an easy-going Minister at a time when most people who are likely to know consider that Britain is running into a food crisis almost as serious as the coal crisis. Coal and food, both products of the soil, must be the mainstays of the simpler economy that has been forced on the country. We all agreed about that and, knowing the untapped potentialities of the soil above ground, we wanted to do more in our own ways. Pious hopes of increased output, particularly of milk, eggs and bacon, have been expressed by the Minister and endorsed in amiable terms by the headquarters of the N.F.U., who pledge farmers to do all that they can to produce more and save dollars. But neither party seems yet to have got down to the realities of the position. Farmers in the country have been given no strong lead such as they were accustomed to get in the war years when food supplies were critical. There may be some circulars from 55, Whitehall percolating through to the county agricultural executive committees which eventually will reach the ears of district committee members, who, if they are not too busy on their own farms, will visit their neighbours and see whether they can do a little more. All this is too timid and too slow in producing results.

Barley for Pig Feeding

ONE of my fellow travellers declared roundly that he could produce 100 bacon pigs in 1948, and 300 in 1949 if he could count on keeping some of this year's barley for pig feeding. He had kept 4 sows as a nucleus from which to build up his pig numbers, but, he asked, what would be the sense of expanding until he knew that he could feed more pigs if he reared them? The promise that farmers will be allowed to keep a significant proportion of their 1948 barley for pig feeding was altogether too dim to set him going now. This farmer also kept poultry, up to 600 he said, before the war and if he could count on having wheat for them he would immediately start expanding again. The hen houses are standing idle and his daughter is back from the A.T.S. There must be many thousands of farms like this that could, allowed the facilities now, increase the consumers' egg and bacon rations by next year.

Cake for Calves

THE other two travellers were both milk men. Their farms on heavy ground are not suited to any more tillage than they must do in these days to feed their cows. They both make silage, one I suspect more successfully than the other, and this helps out the cake ration when the kale is finished at Christmas. They talked appreciatively of the Milk Marketing Board's move to start the co-operative drying of grass which is beginning now in the Thornbury district of Gloucestershire. Dried grass, they thought, would be a godsend and cheap at £15 a ton. How soon can we come in on this? they asked. Could they grow some linseed, selling it at £40 a ton to the Ministry of Food and get back the linseed cake? That, they thought, would be excellent for the calves which do not nowadays get the best of feed. Could they buy the right kind of linseed for sowing next month? One of them used to rear some steer calves and sell them as beef stores. If the price were right and he

could get some linseed cake to mix with oats he would rear 8 or 10 steer calves straightaway.

No Complaints Over Prices

NONE of the party had any serious complaints about the new scale of prices. They wanted the means to take advantage of them. One particularly welcomed the drop in the acreage payment on potatoes and the prospect of being excused next year his wartime quota of 3 acres. He had found potato-growing a laborious job that does not pay. He has not any potato-lifting machinery and last autumn the rain came before he got to his potatoes and they stayed in the ground until just before Christmas. He spoke for many others who welcome the idea that potato-growing will be left to those best able to tackle it economically. If more potato lifters could be got (and there are now some useful machines) some farmers who can grow 10 to 20 acres would gladly grow 50 or 100 acres and relieve the farmers of the unnatural potato districts from their present obligations. So our railway talk ran until we reached our destinations. Each in his own way wanted to do more and each felt frustrated.

Lambing Losses

IN Wales and the North losses among breeding ewes have been serious and the lamb crop must be fewer by many thousands. This is a disaster for many hill farmers who, despite hill sheep subsidies, have not been doing too well, and it is a grave matter, too, for the many lowland farmers who rely on the hill flocks for the regular replacement in their breeding flocks. I bought 50 Half-Bred ewe lambs last September which cost me 109s. at my home station. (Half-Bred lambs are, I should perhaps explain, the progeny of the Border Leicester ram and the Cheviot ewe bred in the Border Country in the north of Scotland.) I thought the price stiff enough, as these sheep will not carry lambs until next season, but now they must be worth considerably more. They have wintered well, and I am glad that I did not try to breed from them in the first year. The snow and hard conditions have been bad enough for mature ewes due to lamb in March and early April. I know that forward Half-Bred lambs can be bred from in their first year and I have had fair results myself in an open season when they could be done well through the winter and there was an early bite of grass in the late spring, but this was not the year to force the pace of Nature.

Patching Corn Crops

AS the fields begin to show the earth again, farmers are looking anxiously at the autumn-sown corn to see how the plants survived this grimmest of winters. Unless the crop has perished altogether, a top dressing of nitrogen may suffice to restore vigour, and I shall give my crops a fortnight to recover before attempting to patch the wheat with barley, which is never a very satisfactory job.

Chicory in Pastures

THE pioneers in making grass have believed in using chicory in the mixture. They liked this plant because of its deep roots, which tap sources of fertility beyond the reach of most herbage plants. The leaves of chicory remain succulent and green in a dry time and this also is a useful quality. The trouble about including chicory in a ley mixture is that the plant is so succulent that it takes much drying when a hay crop is being made. Let even so I like to include a little chicory—about 4 lb. to the acre. Whether or not this is sound commercial practice, the blue flowers please me and I like to think of the subsoil being opened up by the big tap roots.

CINCINNATUS.

THE ESTATE MARKET

FARM PRICES AND OFFERS

MR. LESLIE H. G. WAITE, of the Yeovil office of Messrs. Jackson-Stops and Staff, had a large company at Newton Abbot, notwithstanding the weather, when he offered the South Devon dairy farm, known as Bickham, Diptford, South Brent. After brisk bidding the hammer fell, to an Essex buyer, at £7,500.

For £18,250 Mr. Alfred J. Burrows, on behalf of Mr. Harold Tukes executors, sold Mill Street Farm, on the Benenden-Hawkhurst road, five miles from Cranbrook, Kent. The holding of 118 acres includes 32 acres of hop garden (basic value, 399 cwt.), 13 acres of bush fruit and plum and pear trees now well matured, and 14 acres of chestnut, which has made as much as £60 an acre. The farm-house contains massive old oak beams, joists and floors, and the modern hop-oast, lighted by electricity, has an oil-fed drying plant. There are 74 nicely fitted huts, and a couple of modern cottages. The wire-work and hop-poles, the timber and everything, were included, so that the farm passes at once, free of any tenement valuation.

FUTURE OF A FAMOUS TRING FARM

THE present owner of the Home Farm, Tring, Hertfordshire (114 acres) is Flight-Lieutenant R. J. Kill. A breeder of the Kytes Shire Stud. He intends to live at Whaddon Hall, near Bletchley, Buckinghamshire, and has instructed Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley to sell the farm.

The second Lord Rothschild made the farm famous for its prize-winning cattle and horses. The buildings rank among the finest in the country, and the "milking parlour" is said to be the only one of its kind. The Shire and Hunter stabling is lavishly fitted. Much of the farm-house is panelled in oak that was originally ordered by Charles II for Nell Gwyn.

IN THE BRONTË COUNTRY

THE Atkinson Jowett estate, in and near Bradford, Yorkshire, some thousands of acres, including typical Brontë country at Oakworth, will be submitted in 60 lots, next month at Bradford, by Messrs. Jackson-Stops and Staff's Leeds office. Bilton Hall, Yorkshire, the late Mr. Atkinson Jowett's Elizabethan house and 30 acres, overlooking the Nidd, will come under the hammer at Harrogate.

Other large areas in Yorkshire are in the hands of Messrs. John D. Wood and Co., among them Cowlam estate, four farms, two miles from Sledmere; and 360 acres, a couple of miles from Filey. The total rents of the two properties are about £1,200 a year.

Captain and Mrs. Derek Fitzgerald have decided to sell the Georgian mansion and 2,600 acres, Branches Park, Newmarket, Suffolk. Many of the rooms are panelled in walnut. The joint agents are Messrs. Dilley, Theakston and Beardmore, with Messrs. Turner, Lord and Ransom. The estate includes 14 farms and other holdings. The park proper is of 200 acres, and there are 150 acres of coverts.

WHITEKNIGHTS FOR UNIVERSITY USE

SIR HENRY J. d'AVIGDOR-GOLDSMID, for whom Messrs. Rees-Reynolds and Hunt acted, has accepted an offer of over £100,000 for Whiteknights, near Reading, Berkshire, 300 acres, which will be eventually used for Reading University. The estate once belonged to the 5th Duke of Marlborough, and it is noted

for its rich collection of imported trees and shrubs. The purchase price was calculated on the basis of values as in March, 1939.

Deddington Manor, Oxfordshire, a modernised early Georgian residence with 13½ acres, and having a long frontage in Deddington village on the Oxford-Banbury road, has been sold privately under instructions from the executors of Major R. G. Roberts. The purchaser is Major Phillip Spence.

CITY RENTAL OF £2,718

SPIRITED bidding took the price of Nos. 76-79, St. Paul's Churchyard and 10, London House Yard, known as Wren's View to £35,800, at which Messrs. Jones, Lang, Wootton and Sons declared it sold. Part of the premises are still untenanted, owing to war damage, but the flats and other lettable accommodation yield a gross rent of £2,718 a year. The freeholders are the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who granted the lease in 1934, at a ground rent of £1,350 a year, now, through war damage, reduced to £1,018 a year. The flats are subject to the Rent Restrictions Acts.

NATIONALISATION WARNINGS

INDIVIDUAL holders of railway and electricity shares know what they have to look forward to in the shape of curtailed income if various schemes now under consideration materialise, and the trustees of societies are warning their beneficiaries of the serious reduction of income that must follow the taking over of the concerns by the Government. Gradually the opponents of the proposed interference with real property are marshalling their arguments against it, though so far there is a lack of definite figures of probable loss.

It is significant that arrangements are being made to bring large blocks of freehold ground rents into the market, as well as freehold business premises, with immediate or early possession, in all parts of London, from the centre of the City to the remoter suburbs. For many years it has been known that the reversionary value of sites and premises tended rather to recede than to advance, and the development proposals threaten every type of private building, and the conversion and improvement of existing property.

EMBARGO ON IMPROVEMENT

THE levy on development will put a stop to improvements, and at the same time mean a heavy increase in rents, and this without benefit to the builder, and when the general trading outlook is uncertain and obscure. The question is not merely one for financially powerful interests, for there are, it is estimated, 4,000,000 persons classified as owner-occupiers. Any possibility of ever gaining anything by the gradual change in character of their districts, for example, by allowing a dwelling-house to be converted to business use, disappears under development acquisition. Mr. Dalton lately remarked: "We are getting a very good bargain indeed in obtaining for the community, for all time, all development value present and future, for the payment, within five years, of £300,000,000." Perhaps he was reflecting that the Report of the Barlow Committee, which included eminent valuers and managers of real property, made an "intelligent guess" that the value in 1938 of the development rights in undeveloped land, rural and urban, was £400,000,000.

ARBITER

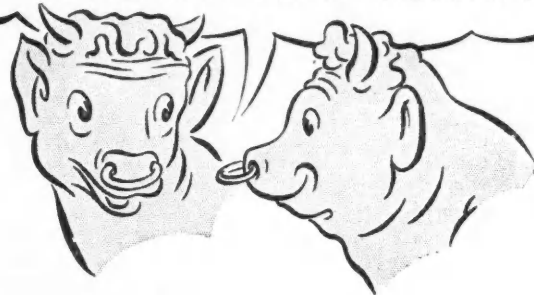
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A combination of mole and stone in diagonal velours; the waisted topcoat with full sleeves that are caught by elastic to various levels, the suit with a panel on the stone skirt, the blouse maize crêpe. Victor Stiebel at Jacqmar

PRELUDE TO SPRING



Tiered cap in suède from Leathercraft



Rose-beige felt sailor with a rolled brim. Scotts

COLLECTIONS in the great Mayfair houses are now being shown to the private clientele, and these clothes for the home market show the same basic simplicity of line as the models designed for export. Beautiful fabrics and subtle combinations of colour give elegance to the clothes, which are above all things extremely wearable. Gala evening dresses and some glamorous garden party and Ascot creations remind us that the joys of summer will be here some time.

Tweeds are cut with classic simplicity. Town suits and ensembles mostly fit closely, with the slender line broken by a touch of drapery somewhere on the hip line or a fluid godet springing out at one point. The other type of summer ensemble shows a pencil-slim dress under a straight coat. The coat, when it is full length, tends to taper towards the hem with a cape collar adding to the top-heavy look, or have godets set in the back.

The prints are charming, mostly abstract in design in bright mixed colours on light grounds. The aim on everything for day or night is to make the waist look tiny. Some houses accentuate this by adding wide starched petticoats under the full-gathered skirts; others have tiny boned corsets specially made for wearing under the doll-waisted, full-skirted dresses. This line has brought back a low, oval or boat-shaped neckline with a fichu, a frill or drapery framing the shoulders—always a most becoming line.

Norman Hartnell includes a series of slender, elegant evening dresses in matt crêpe that feature diagonal or spiral seaming and a slanting décolletage. A long scarf that begins on the left shoulder, twines over the top to make a sleeve and floats down to the hemline carries on the Roman theme. His romantic satin crinolines are beautiful as a picture. A garden party or bridesmaid frock for a young girl is

shown in white embroidered Swiss muslin, its high fitted bodice with short puffed sleeves. The skirt, which moulds to the hips, is cut to points at knee level where it bursts out into a wide foaming hem. This dress is shown over a pale yellow slip and has a spray of yellow flowers at the waist. The Hartnell bride is in pearly lamé with wide, soft sleeves caught at the wrist, a gathered bodice and a skirt all soft folds.

The day dresses are short and trim with three-quarter or short cap sleeves and are mostly cut high to the throat and collarless. A short black chiffon is tucked all over, exceedingly sophisticated and dead

(Continued on page 530)



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plain. There is a town suit with a knife-pleated skirt and a straight hip-length jacket in one of the closely-woven soft-textured worsteds, brown and grey, and this has one of the fashionable striped blouses in maize and dark brown. The whole outfit is as fresh and debonair as you could wish for. A cotton gabardine mackintosh is perfect for a voyage or hot climate. Apricot coloured, it is belted in front, hangs loose at the back and has a hood to pull over the hair.

Victor Stiebel continues the tulip skirts that he launched last season, showing bevelled curves and a very neat unpadded shoulder line. His printed frocks are outstanding. A putty coloured crêpe has a pattern of stylised flowers in turquoise, clay red and pale yellow. Its skirt is draped over to one side, the top is cut low with a swag of drapery covering the top of the arms and twining over the bodice. A black print with rosy pink flowers is slender as a willow wand with a bolero top and long, plain sleeves. It is shown under a black cloth coat with deep armholes, cape collar and a hem that tapers so that the general effect is top-heavy. A print for Ascot has its petalled skirt, curved up in front matching the wide elbow-length cape sleeves. The print is in a wrought-iron design in greys and blacks on a white ground, a wonderfully cool-looking print for a hot day.

Pastel crêpe dresses have their slender skirts elaborately draped their bodices cut low, their sleeves hanging to the wrists, wide and straight. For evening Mr. Stiebel shows the same slender petalled skirts with plain tops, and an immense rose tucked into the waist-line. Colours are biscuit, mushroom, mist blue and a pale chalky blue. One of the pale blues is especially pretty with a low square décolletage in front and a tiny cape with narrow sequin fringe in sapphire blue that drapes over the arms and is caught at the points of the décolletage. A print shows this same square, low décolletage in front with a high back, a tight bodice and swags of drapery over the top of the arms.

A distinct 1910ish influence marks the jackets in the Busvine



Caramel-coloured felt that is worn tilted slightly forward. Scotts (London only)

with pencil-slim skirts and draped bodices, brief draped sleeves. Cock-tail dresses in heavy matt silk crêpe are worn with straw and tulle hats with shallow crowns and brims that are wider from side to side than from front to back. These hats are worn on the back of the head and generally have a large rose or spray of flowers laid under the brim and tie on under the chin with tulle streamers. Brocade evening dresses with full looped skirts and tiny fitted jackets were shown with the same "garden party" hats. Evening colours are pale lilac, ice blue and grey for a brocade silk, powder blue, black. A bride's dress in white and silver brocade was cut high to the throat and had a cap of white roses attached to ear pads of white feathers.

P. JOYCE REYNOLDS.

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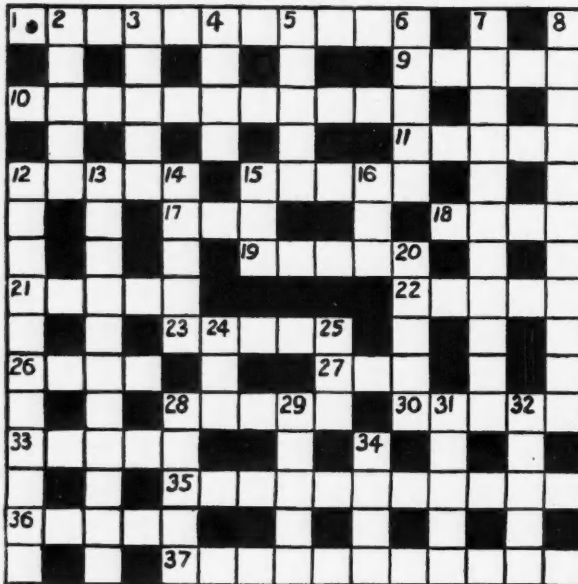
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CROSSWORD No. 893

Two guineas will be awarded for the first correct solution opened. Solutions (in a closed envelope) must reach "Crossword No. 893, COUNTRY LIFE, 2-10, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2," not later than the first post on Thursday, March 27, 1947.

NOTE.—This Competition does not apply to the United States.



Name
(Mr., Mrs., etc.)
Address

SOLUTION TO No. 892. The winner of this Crossword, the clues of which appeared in the issue of March 14, will be announced next week.

ACROSS.—1 and 4, Curtain raisers; 9, Self-starter; 11 and 12, Primrose; 13, Cretins; 15, Anvils; 16, Thrall; 19, Prince; 20, Apiece; 23, Oliver; 26, Opener; 27, Rigours; 28 and 30, Back play; 31, Honeysuckle; 32 and 33, Tutelar deities. **DOWN.**—1, Chapman; 2, Teem; 3, Infers; 5, Arrant; 6, Seer; 7, Squeals; 8, State; 9, Silver birch; 10, Roman candle; 13, Clinker; 14, Shrimps; 17 and 18, Betray; 21, Doublet; 22, Prayers; 24, Ribera; 25, Boast; 26, Oracle; 29, Kobe; 30, Plot.

collection. They have the cut-away fronts, the curves and the wrap-around hip line of that period, shown with tight, short skirts. In off-white velours and in flat fur, these jackets have decided chic. The tailor-mades have unobtrusive details, minute strappings or diamond insets and darts on the waist-line, to curve them to the figure. They are built with the scientific precision of a complicated engineering feat and have the same smooth perfection of line.

The printed dresses are simple, wearable and extremely pretty. The skirts are tight and the high, moulded bodices are made without collars and with short sleeves. A heavy hopsack rayon printed in an Egyptian striped pattern, clay red on an ivory ground, is uncrushable, the ideal frock for town or travelling. A cherry red evening frock with a cross-over bodice, slit to the waist and filled in with a black jet modesty vest has the jet used again to make tiny fringed sleeves. A wonderful woollen like a doeskin makes an off-white evening jacket, cut like a coolie's at the neck with deep armholes and plain sleeves.

Angele Delanghe shows suits with jackets that have a jutting line below the waist—this achieved by a fan of pleats or a deep inverted pleat. Skirts are pencil-slim or sun-ray pleated. Summer coats over printed frocks fasten low almost to the waist with long revers. The prints are cut with pencil-slim skirts and draped bodices, brief draped sleeves. Cock-tail dresses in heavy matt silk crêpe are worn with straw and tulle hats with shallow crowns and brims that are wider from side to side than from front to back. These hats are worn on the back of the head and generally have a large rose or spray of flowers laid under the brim and tie on under the chin with tulle streamers. Brocade evening dresses with full looped skirts and tiny fitted jackets were shown with the same "garden party" hats. Evening colours are pale lilac, ice blue and grey for a brocade silk, powder blue, black. A bride's dress in white and silver brocade was cut high to the throat and had a cap of white roses attached to ear pads of white feathers.

P. JOYCE REYNOLDS.

- ACROSS.**
1. She is stable (anagr.) (11)
 9. He might be called 21-conscious (5)
 10. It looks as though in the end there were no freedom in playing truant (11)
 11. Opposite of stiffen (5)
 12. A present which even the bare-footed might not like to be given (5)
 15. Cain's South American offspring (5)
 - 17 and 18. Landing the airman gets over before Lent? (7)
 19. Turn but a stone and start a strain (5)
 21. More than a throw for rank (5)
 22. A nail has got twisted in it (5)
 23. As floods might treat the salt-pans? (5)
 26. "The best is yet to be, The last of—, for which the first was made."—*Browning* (4)
 27. What the centres of all towns have got to possess (3)
 28. But the doctors don't do it for nothing (5)
 30. Hangs (anagr.) (5)
 33. Protrude (5)
 35. Where in Norfolk you may find a ring on the beach and food, too (11)
 36. In 13 down it has dropped (5)
 37. Postmen must wear out a lot of it (11)

- DOWN.**
2. Unstable headgear? (5)
 3. How a caterpillar might take you falling down your neck (5)
 4. What Britain has in common with Venice (4)
 5. Chair from the Andes (5)
 6. Drops or shelters (5)
 7. South American port (11)
 8. The passage the Emperor enjoyed most? (5)
 12. Elkcits (11)
 13. Cock-a-hoop? Just the reverse (11)
 14. "When sorrows come, they come not single—"*Shakespeare* (5)
 - 15 and 16. Took a meal to the pub. (6)
 20. May carry an arm or a stone (5)
 - 24 and 25. Vegetable decay in automobiles (6)
 28. There are usually five, weather permitting (5)
 29. This seems to require a French article. (5)
 - 31 and 32. A flower above the bedside lamp? (9)
 34. Anagram of 26 across (4)

The winner of Crossword No. 891 is

Miss D. Robinson,
170, Kimbolyon Road,
Bedford.

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